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BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

SELF-REVEALED

A BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL STUDY BASED MAINLY ON HIS OWN WRITINGS

BY

WILLIAM CABELL BRUCE

Author of "John Randolph of Roanoke" and "Below the James"

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"Good wine needs no bush, and bad wine is not long helped by one. The same thing may be said of books and prefaces; so I leave the second edition of this book, as I did the first, to find its way in the world unheralded, as best it can."

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CONTENTS

PAGE

INTRODUCTION 1

CHAPTER

I.—FRANKLIN'S MORAL STANDING AND SYSTEM . 12

II.—FRANKLIN'S RELIGIOUS BELIEFS . . . 51

III.—FRANKLIN, THE PHILANTHROPIST AND CITIZEN . 102

IV.—FRANKLIN'S FAMILY RELATIONS 198

V.—FRANKLIN'S AMERICAN FRIENDS 310

VI.—FRANKLIN'S BRITISH FRIENDS 372

VII.—FRANKLIN'S FRENCH FRIENDS 473

Benjamin Franklin Self-Revealed

Introduction

IN reading the life of Benjamin Franklin, the most lasting impressions left upon the mind are those of versatility and abundance. His varied genius lent itself without effort to the minutest details of such commonplace things as the heating and ventilation of rooms, the correction of smoky chimneys and naval architecture and economy. His severely practical turn of mind was disclosed even in the devices with which he is pictured in his old age as relieving the tedium of physical effort —the rolling press with which he copied his letters, the fan which he worked with his foot in warm weather as he sat reading, the artificial hand with which he reached the books on the upper shelves of his library. But, sober as Franklin's genius on this side was, it proved itself equal to some of the most exacting demands of physical science; and above all to the sublime task, which created such a world-wide stir, of reducing the wild and mysterious lightning of the heavens to captivity, and bringing it down in fluttering helplessness to the earth. It was a rare mind indeed which could give happy expression to homely maxims of plodding thrift, and yet enter-

tain noble visions of universal philanthropy. The stretch between Franklin's weighty observations on Population, for instance, and the bright, graceful bagatelles, with which his pen occasionally trifled, was not a short one; but it was compassed by his intellect without the slightest evidence of halting facility. It is no exaggeration to say that this intellect was an organ lacking in no element of power except that which can be supplied by a profound spiritual insight and a kindling imagination alone. *The Many-Sided Franklin*, the title of the essay by Paul Leicester Ford, is a felicitous touch of description. The life, the mind, the character of the man were all manifold, composite, marked by spacious breadth and freedom. It is astonishing into how many different provinces his career can be divided. Franklin, the Man of Business, Franklin, the Philosopher, Franklin, the Writer, Franklin, the Statesman, Franklin, the Diplomatist, have all been the subjects of separate literary treatment. As a man of business, he achieved enough, when the limitations of his time and environment are considered, to make him a notable precursor of the strong race of self-created men, bred by the later material expansion of America. As a scientist, his brilliant electrical discoveries gave him for a while, as contemporary literature so strikingly evinces, a position of extraordinary pre-eminence. As a writer, he can claim the distinction of having composed two productions, *The Autobiography* and *The Way to Wealth*, which are read the world over. Of his reputation as a statesman it is enough to remark that his signature is attached to the Declaration of Independence, the Treaty of Alliance between the United States and France, the Treaty of Peace between Great Britain and the United States, and the Federal Constitution. Of his labors as a diplomatist it may be said that, if it is true that, without the continuous assistance of France, our independence would not have been secured, it is

perhaps equally true that, without his wisdom, tact and European prestige, we should never have retained this assistance, so often imperilled by the jealousy and vanity of his colleagues as well as by the usual accidents of international intercourse. His life was like a full five-act play—prophetic prologue and stately epilogue, and swelling scene imposed upon swelling scene, until the tallow chandler's son, rising from the humblest levels of human fortune to the highest by uninterrupted gradations of invincible success, finally becomes the recipient of such a degree of impressive homage as has rarely been paid to anyone by the admiration and curiosity of mankind.

To such a diversified career as this the element of mere longevity was, of course, indispensable. Renown so solid and enduring as that of Franklin and acquired in so many different fields was not a thing to be achieved by a few fortunate strokes. He did not awake one morning, as did Byron, to find himself famous; though his fame in the province of electrical science travelled fast when it once got under way. Such a full-orbed renown could be produced only by the long gestation of many years of physical vigor and untiring activity. With the meagre opportunities afforded by colonial conditions for the accumulation of wealth, there had to be an extended period of unflagging attention to Poor Richard's saying: "Many a little makes a mickle." To this period belong some things that the self-revelation of the *Autobiography*, unselfish as it is, cannot dignify, or even redeem from moral squalor, and other things which even the frankness itself of the *Autobiography* is not frank enough to disclose. Then there is the unique story, imprinted upon the face of Philadelphia to this day, of his fruitful exertions as Town Oracle and City Builder. Then there is the episode of scientific inquiry, all too brief, when the prosperous printer and tradesman, appraising

wealth at its true value, turns away from his printing press and stock of merchandise to give himself up with enthusiastic ardor to the study of electrical phenomena. Then there is the long term of public employment, beginning with the Clerkship of the Pennsylvania Assembly and not ending until, after many years of illustrious public service as legislator, administrator, diplomatic agent and foreign minister, Franklin complains in a letter to Dr. and Mrs. John Bard that the public, not content with eating his flesh, seems resolved to pick his bones.

The amount of work that he did, the mass of results that he accomplished, during the long tract of time covered by his life, is simply prodigious. Primarily, Franklin was a man of action. The reputation that he coveted most was, as he declared, in a letter to Samuel Mather, that of a doer of good. Utility was the standard set by him for all his activities, and even his system of ethics did not escape the hard, griping pressure of this standard. What he aimed at from first to last, whether in the domain of science, literature or government, was practical results, and men, as they are known to experienced and shrewd, though kindly, observers of men, were the agencies with which he sought to accomplish such results. He never lost sight of the sound working principle, which the mere academician or closet philosopher is so prone to forget, that the game cannot be played except with the chess-men upon the board. But happily for the world few men of action have ever bequeathed to posterity such abundant written records of their lives. When Franklin desired to promote any project or to carry any point, he invariably, or all but invariably, invoked the aid of his pen to attain his end. To write for money, or for the mere pleasure of writing, or even for literary fame was totally alien to the purposes for which he wrote. A pen was to him merely another practical instrument for forwarding some private aim of his

or some definite public or political object, to which his sympathies and powers were committed, or else but an aid to social amusement. As the result of this secondary kind of literary activity, he left behind him a body of writings of one kind or another which enables us to measure far more accurately than we should otherwise have been able to do the amount of thought and performance crowded into those eventful years of lusty and prolific existence. In the Library of Congress, in the Library of the American Philosophical Society, in the Library of the University of Pennsylvania, in numerous other collections in both hemispheres are found the outflowings of a brain to which exuberance of production was as natural as rank vegetation to a fat soil. Nor should it be forgotten that many of his papers have perished, which, if still extant, would furnish additional proofs of the fertility of his genius and swell the sum of pleasure and instruction which we derive from his works. With the sigh that we breathe over the lost productions of antiquity might well be mingled another over the papers and letters which were confided by Franklin, on the eve of his mission to France, to the care of Joseph Galloway, only to fall a prey to ruthless spoliation and dispersion. To look forward to a long winter evening enlivened by the missing letters that he wrote to his close friends, Jonathan Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph's, "the good Bishop," as he called him, Sir Edward Newenham, of the Irish Parliament, and Jan Ingenhousz, physician to Maria Theresa, would alone, to one familiar with his correspondence, be as inviting a prospect as could be held out to any reader with a relish for the intimate letters of a wise, witty and humorous letter-writer.

The length of time during which the subtle and powerful mind of Franklin was at work is, we repeat, a fact that must be duly taken into account in exploring the foundations of his celebrity. "By living twelve years

beyond David's period," he said in one of his letters to George Whatley, "I seem to have intruded myself into the company of posterity, when I ought to have been abed and asleep." He was born in Boston, Massachusetts, on January 6 (old style), 1706, and died in the City of Philadelphia on April 17, 1790. At the time of his birth, Anne was in the fourth year of her reign as Queen of England, and Louis XIV. was King of France. Only eighty-five years had elapsed since the landing at Plymouth. More than three years were to elapse before the battle of Malplaquet, more than five years before the publication of the first *Spectator*, twenty years before the publication of *Gulliver's Travels*. Franklin's name was an honored one not only in his native land but beyond seas before any of the other great men who signed the Declaration of Independence had emerged from provincial obscurity. His birth preceded that of Washington by twenty-six years, that of John Adams by thirty years, that of Jefferson by thirty-seven years. Coming into the world only fifteen years after the outbreak of the witchcraft delusion at Salem, he lived to be a member of the Federal Convention and to pass down to us as modern in spirit and purpose as the American House of Representatives or the American Patent Office. He, at least, is a standing refutation of the claim that all the energetic tasks of human life are performed by young men. He was seventy years of age when he arrived in France to enter upon the laborious diplomatic career which so signally increased the lustre of his fame and so gloriously prospered our national fortunes; and he was seventy-nine years of age when his mission ended. But even then, weighed down though he was by the strong hand of time and vexed by diseases which left him little peace, there was no danger that he would be classed by anyone with the old townsmen of whom Lord Bacon speaks "that will be still sitting at their Street doore

though thereby they offer Age to Scorne." After his return from France, he lived long enough to be thrice elected President of the State of Pennsylvania and to be a useful member of the Convention that framed the Federal Constitution; and only twenty-four days before his death he wrote the speech of Sidi Mehemet Ibrahim on the petition of the Erika, or Purists for the abolition of piracy and slavery which is one of the happiest effusions of his satirical genius.

Multos da annos is a prayer, we may readily believe, that is often granted by the Gods with a scornful smile. In the case of Franklin, even without such a protracted term of life as was his portion, he would still have enjoyed a distinguished place in the memory of men, but not that broad, branching, full-crowned fame which makes him one of the most conspicuous landmarks of the eighteenth century.

And fully in keeping with the extent of this fame was the extent of his relationship to the social and intellectual world of his time. The main background of his life, of course, was American—Lake Champlain, the St. Lawrence, the Charles, the Connecticut, the Hudson, the Delaware and the Ohio rivers; the long western reaches of the Atlantic; the dark curtain of firs and hemlocks and primeval masses of rock which separated the two powers that ceaselessly struggled for the mastery of the continent, and rarely lifted except to reveal some appalling tragedy, chargeable to the French and their dread ally, the Red Indian; Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Fort Duquesne—all the internal features and surroundings in a word of the long, narrow strip of English territory between Boston and Philadelphia with which he was so familiar, and over which his influence was asserted in so many ways. With the exception of his brief sojourn in London in his youth, his whole life was passed in the Colonies until he was fifty-one years of age. Before

he sailed for England in 1757, upon his first foreign mission, the circumstances of his career had been such as to make him generally known to the people of the Colonies. His *Almanac*, his *Gazette*, his pithy sayings, his humorous stories, his visits to Boston, attended by the formation of so many wayside friendships, his postal expeditions, the printing presses set up by him at many different points, his private fortune, his public services, his electrical experiments were all breath for the trump of his fame. He knew Colonial America as few Colonial Americans knew it. He was born and reared in Boston, and, after his removal to Philadelphia, he revisited his native city at regular intervals. "The Boston manner, turn of phrase, and even tone of voice, and accent in pronunciation, all please, and seem to refresh and revive me," he said in his old age in a letter to the Rev. John Lathrop. Philadelphia, the most populous and opulent of the colonial towns, was his lifelong place of residence. In the *Autobiography* he refers to it as "A city I love, having lived many years in it very happily." He appears to have been quite frequently in New York. His postal duties took him as far south as Williamsburg, and the Albany Congress drew him as far north of New York as Albany. He was in the camp of Braddock at Frederick, Maryland, just before that rash and ill-starred general set out upon his long, dolorous march through the wilderness where disaster and death awaited him. Facts like these signify but little now when transit from one distant point to another in the United States is effected with such amazing rapidity, but they signified much under the crude conditions of colonial life. Once at least did Franklin have his shoulder dislocated by an accident on the atrocious roads of Colonial New England. Once he was thrown into the water from an upset canoe near Staten Island. His masterly answers, when examined before the House of Commons, showed how searchingly

conversant he was with everything that related to America. For some of our most penetrating glances into colonial life we are indebted to his writings; particularly instructive being his observations upon population in the Colonies, the economic condition and political temper of their people and the characteristics and habits of the Indians. It was a broad experience which touched at one extreme the giddy and artificial life of Paris, on the eve of the French Revolution, and at the other the drunken Indian orgies at the conclusion of the treaty at Carlisle which Franklin has depicted in the *Autobiography* with a brush worthy of Rembrandt in these words: "Their dark-colour'd bodies, half naked, seen only by the gloomy light of the bonfire, running after and beating one another with firebrands, accompanied by their horrid yellings, form'd a scene the most resembling our ideas of hell that could well be imagin'd."

But the peculiar distinction of Franklin is that his life stands out vividly upon an European as well as an American background. It is interesting to contrast the scene at Carlisle with the opera in honor of the Comte du Nord, at which he was present, during the French mission. "The House," he says in his *Journal of the Negotiation for Peace with Great Britain*, "being richly finish'd with abundance of Carving and Gilding, well Illuminated with Wax Tapers, and the Company all superbly drest, many of the Men in Cloth of Tissue, and the Ladies sparkling with Diamonds, form'd altogether the most splendid Spectacle my Eyes ever beheld." Until the august figure of Washington filled the eye of mankind, Franklin was the only American who had ever won a solid and splendid European reputation. The opportunity had not yet arisen for the lively French imagination to declare that he had snatched the sceptre from tyrants, but the first half of Turgot's tremendous epigram had been realized; for the lightning he had snatched, or rather filched, from

the sky. It may well be doubted whether any one private individual with such limited pecuniary resources ever did as much for the moral and intellectual welfare of any one community as Franklin did for pre-revolutionary Philadelphia; but it was impossible that such aspirations and powers as his should be confined within the pale of colonial provincialism. His widespread fame, his tolerant disposition, his early residence in England, his later residence there for long periods, his excursions into Scotland and Ireland and Continental countries, the society of men of the world in London and other great cities combined to endow him with a character truly cosmopolitan which was to be still further liberalized by French influence. During his life, he crossed the Atlantic no less than eight times. After 1757 the greater part of his life was spent abroad. Of the eighty-four years, of which his existence was made up, some twenty-six were passed in England and France. He was as much at home on The Strand as on Market Street in Philadelphia. The friendships that he formed in England and France were almost as close as those that he had formed in Pennsylvania with his cronies, Hugh Roberts and John Bartram. He became so thoroughly domesticated in England during his periods of sojourn in that country that he thought of remaining there for the rest of his life, and yet, if the Brillons had only been willing to confer the hand of their daughter upon his grandson, William Temple Franklin, he would contentedly have died in France. If there ever was an American, if there ever was a citizen of the world, if there ever was a true child of the eighteenth century, it was he. His humanitarian sympathies, his catholic temper, his generous, unobstructed outlook enabled him without difficulty to adjust himself with ease to the genius of every people with whom he was brought into familiar contact. In America he was such a thorough American in every respect that Carlyle is said to have

termed him on one occasion, "The Father of all the Yankees." In England he was English enough to feel the full glow of her greatness and to see her true interests far more clearly than she saw them herself. He had too many Anglo-Saxon traits to become wholly a Frenchman when he lived in France, but he became French enough truly to love France and her people and to be truly beloved by them. In the opinion of Sainte-Beuve he is the most French of all Americans.

CHAPTER I

Franklin's Moral Standing and System

UNTIL a comparatively recent period totally false conceptions in some respects of Franklin's character were not uncommon. To many he was merely the father of a penurious, cheese-paring philosophy, and to no little extent the idea prevailed that his own nature and conduct corresponded with its precepts. There could be no greater error. Of the whole science of prudential economy a master indeed he was. His observations upon human life, in its pecuniary relations, and upon the methods, by which affluence and ease are to be wrested from the reluctant grasp of poverty, are always sagacious in the highest degree. Poor Richard is quite as consummate a master of the science of rising in the world as Aristotle is of the Science of Politics or Mill of the Science of Political Economy. Given health and strength, a man, who faithfully complied with his shrewd injunctions and yet did not prosper, would be as much a freak of nature as a man who thrust his hand into the fire and yet received no physical hurt. The ready and universal assent given to their full truth and force by human experience is attested by the fact that *The Way to Wealth*, or *The Speech of Father Abraham*, "the plain, clean old Man with white Locks," in which Franklin, when writing one of the prefaces of *Poor Richard's Almanac*, condensed the wit and wisdom, original and

second hand, of that incomparable manual of *The Art of Material Success*, has, through innumerable editions and reprints, and translations into every written tongue from the French to the Russian and Chinese, become almost as well known to the entire civilized globe as the unbroken strain of the martial airs of England. So well calculated, it was thought, was it to promote sound principles of diligence and frugality that it was, we are told by Franklin, reprinted in England, to be set up in the form of a broadside in houses, and, when translated into French, was bought by the clergy and gentry of France for distribution among their poor parishioners and tenants. But so far from being the slave of a parsimonious spirit was Franklin that it would be difficult to single out any self-made man who ever formed a saner estimate of the value of money than he did or lived up to it more fearlessly. In seeking money, he was actuated, as his early retirement from business proved, only by the high-minded motive to self-enrichment which is so pointedly expressed in the lines of Burns:

"Not for to hide it in a hedge,
Nor for a train attendant,
But for the glorious privilege
Of being independent."

No sooner did he accumulate a sufficient fortune to provide for the reasonable wants of his family and himself than he proceeded to make this fortune the handmaid of some of the higher things of life—wholesome reading, scientific research, public usefulness, schemes of beneficence. In 1748, when he was in the full flush of business success and but forty-two years of age, he deliberately, for the sake of such things, retired from all active connection with business pursuits. In a letter to Abiah Franklin, his mother, shortly after he found himself free

forever from the cares of his shop, he speaks of himself in these words: "I enjoy, thro' Mercy, a tolerable Share of Health. I read a great deal, ride a little, do a little Business for myself, more for others, retire when I can, and go into Company when I please; so the Years roll round, and the last will come; when I would rather have it said, *He lived Usefully*, than *He died Rich*." About the same time, he wrote to William Strahan, a business correspondent, that the very notion of *dying worth* a great sum was to him absurd, and just the same as if a man should run in debt for one thousand superfluities, to the end that, when he should be stripped of all, and imprisoned by his creditors, it might be said, he *broke worth* a great sum. On more than one occasion, when there was a call upon his public zeal, his response was generous to the point of imprudence. The bond that he gave to indemnify against loss the owners of the wagons and horses procured by his energy and address for Braddock's expedition led to claims against him to the amount of nearly twenty thousand pounds, which would have ruined him, if the British Government had not rescued him after long delay from his dreadful situation. Without hesitation he entered during his first mission to England into a personal engagement that an act taxing the estate of the Proprietaries of Pennsylvania in common with the estates of the People of Pennsylvania would not result in any injustice to the Proprietaries. On a later occasion, in order to prevent war between Great Britain and her Colonies, he was willing to bind himself, to the whole extent of his private fortune, to make pecuniary reparation for the destruction of the tea cast into Boston harbor, if the Province of Massachusetts did not do so. One of his last acts before leaving America for his mission to France was to place the sum of three or four thousand pounds, which was a large part of this fortune, and all the ready money at his command, at the disposal of Congress. His salary

as President of Pennsylvania was all given or bequeathed by him to public objects. The small sums, to which he became entitled as one of the next of kin of his father and his cousin, Mrs. Fisher, of Wellingborough, England, he relinquished to members of the family connection who needed them more than he did. Once, though a commercial panic was prevailing, he pledged his credit to the extent of five thousand pounds for the purpose of supporting that of a London friend. His correspondence nowhere indicates any degree of pecuniary caution in excess of the proper demands of good sense. On the contrary, it furnishes repeated testimony to his promptitude in honoring the solicitations of private distress or subscribing to public purposes. Conspicuously unselfish was he when the appeal was to his public spirit or to his interest in the general welfare of mankind. Among his innumerable benefactions was a gift of one thousand pounds to Franklin College, Pennsylvania. When he invented his open stove for the better warming of rooms, he gave the model to his friend, Robert Grace, who found, Franklin tells us in the *Autobiography*, the casting of the plates for the stove at his furnace near Philadelphia a profitable thing. So far from begrudging this profit to his friend, he wrote his interesting *Account of the New-invented Pennsylvanian Fireplaces* to promote the public demand for the invention. A London ironmonger made some small changes in the stove, which were worse than of no value to it, and reaped, Franklin was told, a little fortune by it. "And this," he says in the *Autobiography*, "is not the only instance of patents taken out for my inventions by others, tho' not always with the same success, which I never contested, as having no desire of profiting by patents myself, and hating disputes." When he was actually engaged in the business of printing, a similar motive, so far as public spirit went, led him to offer to print a treatise by Cadwallader Colden on the

Cause of Gravitation at his own expense and risk. If he could be the means of communicating anything valuable to the world, he wrote to Colden, he did not always think of gaining nor even of saving by his business.

That the character of Franklin should ever have been deemed so meanly covetous is due to *Poor Richard's Almanac* and the *Autobiography*. The former, with its hard, bare homilies upon the Gospel of Getting on in Life and its unceasing accent upon the duty of scrimping and saving, circulated so long and so widely throughout the Colonies that the real Franklin came to be confused in many minds with the fictitious Poor Richard. Being intended mainly for the instruction and amusement of the common people, whose chief hope of bettering their condition lay in rigid self-denial, it is naturally keyed to unison with the ruder and austerer principles of human thrift. As to the *Autobiography*, with its host of readers, the only Franklin known to the great majority of persons, who have any familiarity with Franklin at all, is its Franklin, and this Franklin is the one who had to "make the night joint-laborer with the day," breakfast on bread and milk eaten out of a two-penny earthen porringer with a pewter spoon, and closely heed all the sage counsels of *Poor Richard's Almanac* before he could even become the possessor of a china bowl and a silver spoon. It is in the *Autobiography* that the story of Franklin's struggle, first for the naked means of subsistence, and then for pecuniary competency, is told; and the harsh self-restraint, the keen eye to every opportunity for self-promotion, and the grossly mechanical theory of morals disclosed by it readily give color to the notion that Franklin was nothing more than a sordid materialist. It should be remembered that it is from the *Autobiography* that we obtain the greatest part of our knowledge of the exertions through which he acquired his fortune, and that the successive ascending stages, by which he climbed the steep slopes that lead up from pov-

erty and obscurity, are indelibly set forth in this lifelike book with a pen as coarse but at the same time as vivid and powerful as the pencil with which Hogarth depicts the descending stages of the Rake's Progress. And along with these facts it should also be remembered that the didactic purpose by which the *Autobiography* was largely inspired should be duly allowed for before we draw too disparaging inferences about Franklin from anything that he says in that book with respect to his career.

It is a curious fact that almost every reproach attaching to the reputation of Franklin is attributable to the candor of the *Autobiography*. It is true that in the political contests between the Proprietary and Popular Parties in Colonial Pennsylvania he was often visited with virulent abuse by the retainers of the Proprietaries. This was merely the dirty froth brought to the surface by every boiling pot. It is also true that, after the transmission of the Hutchinson letters to New England, he was the object of much savage censure at the hands of British Tories. But this censure, for the most part, was as empty as the ravings of the particular bigot who indorsed on the first page of a volume of letters in the Public Record Office, in London, a statement that the thirteen letters of Doctor Franklin in the volume were perhaps then "only precious or Important so far as they prove and discover the Duplicity, Ingratitude, and Guilt of this Arch Traitor whom they unveil and really unmask Displaying him as an accomplish'd Proficient in the blacker Arts of Dissimulation and Guile." Not less hollow was the invective with which the distempered mind of Arthur Lee assailed the character of Franklin when they were together in France. Nor can it be denied that in such Rabelaisian *jeux d'esprit* as Polly Baker's Speech, the Letter on the Choice of a Mistress, and the Essay on Perfumes, dedicated to the Royal Academy of Brussels, in the *naïveté* which marked Franklin's relations

to his natural son, William Franklin, and to his natural son's natural son, William Temple Franklin, and in the ease with which he adopted in his old age the tone, if not the practices, of French gallantry, we cannot but recognize a nature too deficient in the refinements of early social training, too physically ripe for sensual enjoyment and too unfettered in its intellectual movements to be keenly mindful of some of the nicer obligations of scrupulous conduct. In moral dignity, Franklin was not George Washington, though there was no one held in higher honor by him. "If it were a Sceptre, he has merited it, and would become it," he said in bequeathing a fine crab-tree walking stick to Washington, whom he termed "My friend, and the friend of mankind." If for no other reason, Franklin was not Washington because he lacked the family traditions and early social advantages of Washington, and perhaps Washington might have been more like Franklin, if he had had some of Franklin's humor. While the resemblance is limited, Franklin does resemble in some respects Jefferson who was too scientific in spirit and too liberal in his opinions not to be a little of a skeptic and a heretic himself. But nothing can be more certain than the fact that Franklin was esteemed by his contemporaries not only a great but a good man. We pass by the French extravagance which made him out a paragon of all the virtues as well as the *plus grand philosophe du siècle;* for the French were but mad idolaters where he was concerned. It is sufficient for our purposes to limit ourselves to his English and American panegyrists. Referring to Franklin's humble birth, Benjamin Vaughan, a dull but good man, wrote to him that he proved "how little necessary all origin is to happiness, virtue, or greatness." In another place, Vaughan speaks of the "affection, gratitude and veneration" he bears to Franklin. To the sober Quaker, Abel James, the author of the *Autobiography*

was the "kind, humane, and benevolent Ben. Franklin" whose work almost insensibly led the youth "into the resolution of endeavoring to become as good and eminent" as himself. In urging Franklin to complete the story of his life, he added: "I know of no character living, nor many of them put together, who has so much in his power as thyself to promote a greater spirit of industry and early attention to business, frugality, and temperance with the American youth." As Franklin's letters bring to our knowledge friend after friend of his, among the wisest and best men of his day, on both sides of the Atlantic, we begin to ask ourselves whether anyone ever did have such a genius for exciting the sentiment of true, honest friendship in virtuous and useful men. His correspondence with Catherine Ray, Polly Stevenson, and Georgiana Shipley, though several of his letters to the first of the three are blemished by the freedom of the times and vulgar pleasantry, demonstrates that his capacity for awakening this sentiment was not confined to his own sex. Inclined as he was in his earlier and later years, to use Madame Brillon's phrase, to permit his wisdom to be broken upon the rocks of femininity, unbecoming his advanced age and high position as was, as we shall see hereafter, the salacious strain which ran through his letters to this beautiful and brilliant woman, nothing could illustrate better than his relations to Polly Stevenson how essentially incorrupt his heart was when his association was with any member of the other sex who really had modesty to lose. Such was the pure affection entertained for him by this fine woman that, after the death of her celebrated husband, Dr. William Hewson, she removed from London to Philadelphia with her children to be near the friend, little less than a father, who had lavished upon her all that was best in both his mind and heart. There is much in the life of Franklin to make us believe that his standards of sexual morality were entirely

too lax, but there is everything in it, too, to make us believe that he would not only have been incapable of seducing female innocence but would have been slow to withhold in any regard the full meed of deferential respect due to a chaste girl or a virtuous matron. It is hard to repress a smile when we read under the head of "Humility" in his *Table of Virtues*, just below the words, in which, under the head of "Chastity," he deprecates the use of "venery" to the injury of one's own or another's peace or reputation, the injunction for his own guidance, "imitate Jesus and Socrates." All the same, it is a fact that one person, at any rate, Jane Mecom, his sister, even thought him not unworthy to be compared with our Saviour. "I think," she said, "it is not profanity to compare you to our Blessed Saviour who employed much of his time while here on earth in doing good to the body as well as souls of men." Elizabeth Hubbard, the stepdaughter of his brother John, even warned him that, if he was not less zealous in doing good, he would find himself alone in heaven. Through all the observations of his contemporaries vibrates the note that he was too wise and benevolent to belong to anything less than the entire human race. Jonathan Shipley, "The Good Bishop," suggested as a motto suitable to his character, "his country's friend, but more of human kind." Burke called him "the lover of his species." By Sir Samuel Romilly he was pronounced "one of the best and most eminent men of the present age." Chatham eulogized him in the House of Lords as one "whom all Europe held in high Estimation for his Knowledge and Wisdom, and rank'd with our Boyles and Newtons; who was an Honour, not to the English Nation only, but to Human Nature." In one of his works, Lord Kames spoke of him as "a man who makes a great figure in the learned world; and who would make a still greater figure for benevolence and candor, were virtue as much regarded in this declin-

ing age as knowledge." Less formal was the heartfelt tribute of Dr. Samuel Cooper, of Massachusetts, after many years of intercourse: "Your friendship has united two things in my bosom that seldom meet, pride and consolation: it has been the honor and the balm of my life." And when towards the close of Franklin's life he wrote to George Washington, "In whatever State of Existence I am plac'd hereafter, if I retain any Memory of what has pass'd here, I shall with it retain the Esteem, Respect, and Affection, with which I have long been, my dear Friend, yours most sincerely," he received a reply, which was not only a reply, but the stately, measured judgment of a man who never spoke any language except that of perfect sincerity. "If," said Washington, "to be venerated for benevolence, if to be admired for talents, if to be esteemed for patriotism, if to be beloved for philanthropy, can gratify the human mind, you must have the pleasing consolation to know, that you have not lived in vain." "And I flatter myself," he continued, "that it will not be ranked among the least grateful occurrences of your life to be assured that, so long as I retain my memory, you will be recollected with respect, veneration, and affection by your sincere friend." These were credentials indeed for the old printer to take with him on his journey to the bright orbs which it was a part of his early religious fantasies to believe were swayed by Gods intermediate in the scale of intelligent existence between ourselves and the "one Supreme, most Perfect Being, Author and Father of the Gods themselves."[1]

[1] The superlative eulogy of Franklin is that of Josiah Quincy, Junior, who expressed his conviction in his journal that Franklin was one of the wisest and best of men upon earth; one, of whom it might be said that this world was not worthy. Of course, no man capable of creating such a conviction as this was safe from "the wolf's black jaw and the dull ass' hoof." Capefigue in his *Memoirs of Louis XVI.* called Franklin "one of the great charlatans" of his age. This is the language of a man who finds a phrase and thinks he has found a fact. Arthur Lee said on one

It is, we repeat, the *Autobiography* which is mainly responsible for the unfavorable impressions that have been formed about the character of Franklin. It is there that we learn what heady liquor his sprightly mind and free spirit quaffed from the cup of boyhood and what errata blurred the fair, fresh page of his early manhood. It is there that he has told us how, as the result of his written attacks upon the Established Order, Puritan Boston began to consider him in an unfavorable light "as a young genius that had a turn for libelling and satyr"; how his indiscreet disputations about religion caused him to be pointed at with horror by good people in the same starch town as an infidel or atheist; how he availed himself of a fraud in the second indentures of apprenticeship between his brother and himself to claim his freedom before his time was up; how, in distant London, he forgot the troth that he had plighted to Deborah Read; how he attempted familiarities with the mistress of his friend Ralph which she repulsed with a proper resentment; how he broke into the money which Mr. Vernon had authorized him to collect; how he brought over Collins and Ralph to his own free-thinking ways; how he became involved in some foolish intrigues with low women which from the expense were rather more prejudicial to him than to them. It is in the *Autobiography* also that we learn from him how he thought that the daughter of Mrs. Godfrey's relation should bring him as his wife enough money to discharge the remainder of the debt on his

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occasion that Franklin was "the meanest of all mean men, the most corrupt of all corrupt men"; but this was merely the froth of a rabid mental condition. Stephen Sayre wrote to Capellen that Franklin was a "great villain," but Sayre had unsuccessfully solicited office from Franklin. Besides, this extraordinary character seems to have nearly, if not quite, answered Franklin's description of a man who has neither good sense enough to be an honest man nor wit enough for a rogue. The only one of Franklin's slanderers whose arrow hit anywhere near the mark was an anonymous French poet who termed him "Caméléon Octogénaire."

printing house even if her parents had to mortgage their house in the loan office; how partly by sheer force and pinching economy and partly by dexterity and finesse, sometimes verging upon cunning, he pushed himself further and further along the road to fortune, and finally how he was so successful with the help of his *Art of Virtue*, despite occasional stumblings and slips, in realizing his dream of moral perfection as to be able to write complacently upon the margin of the *Autobiography*, "nothing so likely to make a man's fortune as virtue." It is things like these in the *Autobiography* that have tended to create in minds, which know Franklin only in this narrative, the idea that he was a niggard, a squalid utilitarian and even a little of a rogue; though the same *Autobiography* witnesses also that he was not so engrossed with his own selfish interests as not to find time for the enlarged projects of public utility which to this day render it almost impossible for us to think of Philadelphia without recalling the figure of Franklin. *Si monumentum requiris circumspice*, was the proud inscription placed over the grave of Sir Christopher Wren in the city where his genius had designed so many edifices. The same inscription might be aptly placed over the grave of Franklin in Christ Church yard in the city where his public spirit and wisdom laid the foundations of so much that has proved enduring.

There is unquestionably a shabby side to the *Autobiography*, despite the inspiring sacrifice of his physical wants which Franklin made in his boyhood to gratify his intellectual cravings, the high promptings which the appetites and unregulated impulses of his unguarded youth were powerless to stifle, the dauntless resolution and singleness of purpose with which he defied and conquered his adverse star, the wise moderation of his hour of victory, the disinterested and splendid forms of social service to which he devoted his sagacious and fruitful

mind, his manly hatred of injustice and cruelty, his fidelity to the popular cause which neither flattery could cajole nor power overawe. In its mixture of what is noble with what is ignoble the *Autobiography* reminds us of the merchandise sold at the new printing-office near the Market in Philadelphia, where Franklin conducted his business as a printer and a merchant, where his wife, Deborah, assisted him by folding and stitching pamphlets, tending shop and purchasing old linen rags, and where his mother-in-law, Mrs. Read, compounded her sovereign remedy against the itch and lice. Now it was a translation of Cato's *Moral Distichs* or a pamphlet against slavery fresh from his own press, now it was a copy of some devotional or useful work which the last packet had brought over from London, now it was a lot of goose feathers, or old rags, or a likely young negro wench. But on the whole we cannot help thinking that the calm view, which Franklin himself, in the cool of the evening of his life, takes of the early part of his existence, was, with some qualifications, not far wrong. Notwithstanding the dangerous season of youth and the hazardous situations, in which he was sometimes placed among strangers, when he was remote from the eye and advice of his sterling father, Josiah Franklin, he believed, as we know from the *Autobiography*, that he had not fallen into any "willful gross immorality or injustice"; and, start as the student of Franklin may at times at things which might chill for the moment the enthusiasm of even such a Boswellian as the late John Bigelow, to whose editorial services the reputation of Franklin is so deeply indebted, he is likely in his final estimate to find himself in very much the same mood as that which impelled Franklin in the *Autobiography* to make the famous declaration, so true to his normal and intensely vital nature, that, were it offered to his choice, he "should have no objection to a repetition of the same life from its begin-

ning, only asking the advantages authors have in a second edition to correct some faults of the first." Be this as it may, it is at least safe to say that it is very unfair to judge the character of Franklin by the *Autobiography* without bearing in mind one of the leading motives by which he was induced to write his own life. To his great honor it can be said that to do good in the higher social sense, to promote the lasting interests of humanity, to free the march of the race from every handicap, every impediment, whether arising in or outside of ourselves, to instruct, to enlighten, were the dominant incentives, the mellow, yet commanding passions of his existence. Like many another philosopher before and since, in his zeal to subserve the general interest he forgot himself. If other young men treading in his footsteps could be deterred by the warnings of his errors from becoming involved in the mistakes and moral lapses in which his youth and inexperience were involved, he was willing, though not without some misgivings, to lay before them and the whole world all the details of these errors. In composing the *Autobiography*, he was influenced to no little degree by the spirit of a man who bequeaths his own body to the surgeons for the advancement of science. If his reputation suffered by his tender of himself as a *corpus vile* for the benefit of future generations, he was prepared to take this risk, as he was prepared to take the risks of the two electric shocks, which nearly cost him his life, in the promotion of human knowledge. It is impossible for anyone, who is not familiar with the perfect lack of selfish reserve brought by Franklin to the pursuit of truth or the universal interests of mankind, to understand the extent to which, in composing the *Autobiography*, he was moved by generous considerations of this sort. In no other production of his did he show the same disposition to turn the seamier side of his existence to the light for the simple reason that no other production of

his was written with the same homiletic purpose as the *Autobiography*. And, if this purpose had not been so strong upon him, how easy it would have been for him by a little judicious suppression here and a few softening touches there to have altered the whole face of the *Autobiography*, and to have rendered it as faithless a transcript of the slips and blots of his life as are most autobiographies of human beings—even those of men who have enjoyed a high repute for moral excellence—in their relations to the indiscretions, the follies and the transgressions of their immaturer years! At any rate, of the offences of Franklin, mentioned in the *Autobiography*, may be said what cannot be said of the similar offences of many men. He handsomely atoned for them all so far as the opportunity to atone for them arose. It was undoubtedly a serious breach of the moral law for him to have begotten William Franklin out of lawful wedlock, and in the impartial affection, which he publicly bestowed upon his illegitimate son and his legitimate daughter, we see another illustration of his insensibility to the finer inflections of human scruples. But when we see him accept this illegitimate son as if he had come to him over his right shoulder instead of his left, take him under his family roof, give him every advantage that education and travel could confer, seek an honorable alliance for him, put him in the way to become the Governor of Colonial New Jersey, even affectionately recognize his illegitimate son as a grandson, we almost feel as if such ingenuous naturalism had a kind of bastard moral value of its own.

The *Autobiography* is interesting in every respect but in none more so than in relation to the System of Morals adopted by Franklin for his self-government in early life, when, to use his own words in that work, he "conceived the bold and arduous project of arriving at moral perfection." This project once formed, he went about

its execution in a manner as strictly mechanical as if he had been rectifying a smoky chimney or devising a helpful pair of glasses for his defective eyesight. The virtues were classified by him under thirteen heads: Temperance, Silence, Order, Resolution, Frugality, Industry, Sincerity, Justice, Moderation, Cleanliness, Tranquillity, Chastity and Humility. These terms were all tabulated by him in a little pocketbook kept for that especial purpose, and to each virtue the close attention of a week was successively given by him. If an offence was committed by him on a certain day, it was entered by a little black mark under that date opposite the affronted virtue. The object was so to concentrate his vigilance upon each virtue in turn and so to strengthen his capacity to resist every temptation to violate it as finally to render its practice habitual and instinctive. The plan in spirit was not unlike the system of prudential algebra to which he told Joseph Priestley, many years afterwards, that he resorted when his judgment was in a state of uncertainty about some problem. In one column he would jot down on a piece of paper all the *pros* of the case, and in another all the *cons*, and then, by appraising the relative value of each *pro* and *con* set down before his eye, and cancelling equivalent considerations, decide upon which side the preponderance of the argument lay. Even Franklin himself admits that his plan for making an automatic machine of virtue did not work in every respect. Order he experienced extreme difficulty in acquiring. Indeed, this virtue was so much against his grain that he felt inclined to content himself with only a partial measure of fidelity to it, like the man, he said in the *Autobiography*, who, though at first desirous of having his whole ax bright, grew so tired of turning the grindstone on which it was being polished that when the smith, who was holding it, remarked that it was only speckled, and asked him to turn on, he replied, "But I think I like a speckled

ax best." The Humility, too, which Franklin acquired, he was disposed to think was more specious than real. Pride, he moralizes in the *Autobiography*, is perhaps the hardest of our natural passions to subdue, and even, if he could conceive that he had completely overcome it, he would probably, he thought, be proud of his humility. This reminds us of his other observation in the *Autobiography* that he gave vanity fair quarter wherever he met with it, and that, in many cases, it would not be altogether absurd if a man were to thank God for his vanity among the other comforts of life. In the effort, however, to acquire Humility, Franklin did, he informs us in the same work, acquire, as time wore on, the habit of expressing his opinions in such conciliatory forms that no one perhaps for fifty years past had ever heard a dogmatic expression escape him. "And to this habit (after my character of integrity)," he declares, "I think it principally owing that I had early so much weight with my fellow citizens when I proposed new institutions, or alterations in the old, and so much influence in public councils when I became a member; for I was but a bad speaker, never eloquent, subject to much hesitation in my choice of words, hardly correct in language, and yet I generally carried my points." On the whole, even though Franklin did find Order and Humility not easy of attainment, he was very well satisfied with the results of his plan for imparting the force of habit to virtue. In his seventy-ninth year the former tradesman sat down to count deliberately his moral gains. To his "little artifice" with the blessing of God he owed, he felt, the constant felicity of his life until that time. To Temperance he ascribed his long-continued health and what was still left to him of a good constitution; to Industry and Frugality the early easiness of his circumstances and the acquisition of his fortune with all that knowledge that enabled him to be a useful citizen and obtained for

him some degree of reputation among the learned; to Sincerity and Justice the confidence of his country and the honorable employs it conferred upon him; and to the joint influence of the whole mass of the virtues, even in the imperfect state that he was able to acquire them, all that evenness of temper and that cheerfulness in conversation which made his company still sought for and agreeable even to his younger acquaintance. From other expressions of his in the *Autobiography* we are left to infer that he believed that Frugality and Industry, by freeing him from the residue of the debt on his printing house and producing affluence and independence, had made more easy the practice of sincerity and justice and the like by him.

So highly did Franklin esteem his method that he intended to follow it up with a treatise, to be known as the *Art of Virtue*, containing a practical commentary upon each of the virtues inserted in his little book, and showing just how anyone could make himself virtuous, if he only had a mind to. In this treatise, it was his desire, he says in the *Autobiography*, to expound the doctrine that vicious actions are not hurtful because they are forbidden but forbidden because they are hurtful, the nature of man alone considered, and that it is therefore to the interest of everyone to be virtuous who wishes to be happy even in this world. "I should from this circumstance," he said, "(there being always in the world a number of rich merchants, nobility, states, and princes, who have need of honest instruments for the management of their affairs, and such being so rare), have endeavoured to convince young persons that no qualities were so likely to make a poor man's fortune as those of probity and integrity." The thought was more fully developed in a letter to Lord Kames, dated May 3, 1760.

I purpose likewise [he said], a little work for the benefit of youth, to be called the *Art of Virtue*. From the title I think

you will hardly conjecture what the nature of such a book may be. I must therefore explain it a little. Many people lead bad lives that would gladly lead good ones, but know not *how* to make the change. They have frequently *resolved* and *endeavoured* it; but in vain, because their endeavours have not been properly conducted. To expect people to be good, to be just, to be temperate, &c., without *shewing* them *how* they should *become* so, seems like the ineffectual charity mentioned by the Apostle, which consisted in saying to the hungry, the cold, and the naked, "Be ye fed, be ye warmed, be ye clothed," without shewing them how they should get food, fire, or clothing.

Most people have naturally *some* virtues, but none have naturally *all* the virtues. To *acquire* those that are wanting, and secure what we acquire, as well as those we have naturally, is the subject of *an art*. It is as properly an art as painting, navigation, or architecture. If a man would become a painter, navigator, or architect, it is not enough that he is *advised* to be one, that he is *convinced* by the arguments of his adviser, that it would be for his advantage to be one, and that he resolves to be one, but he must also be taught the principles of the art, be shewn all the methods of working, and how to acquire the habits of using properly all the instruments; and thus regularly and gradually he arrives, by practice, at some perfection in the art.

The virtue, which this new art was to fabricate, was obviously too much in keeping with the national tendency to turn over tasks of every sort to self-directed machinery. The *Art of Virtue*, however, was never actually penned, owing to the demands of private and public business upon Franklin's time, and the world was consequently left to get along as it best could with virtue of the old impulsive and untutored type. We are also apprised in the *Autobiography* that the *Art of Virtue* itself was to be but an incident of a great and extensive project which likewise never reached maturity for the same reasons that arrested the completion of that work. This project was the forma-

tion of a United Party for Virtue, to be composed of virtuous men of all nations under the government of suitable good and wise rules. The conditions of initiation into this body, which was to move on sin and debt throughout the world with embattled ranks and flying banners, were to be the acceptance of Franklin's final religious creed, of which we shall have something to say presently, and the continuous practice for thirteen weeks of Franklin's moral regimen; and the members were to engage to afford their advice, assistance and support to each other in promoting one another's interests, business and advancement in life. For distinction, the association was to be called The Society of the Free and Easy, "free, as being, by the general practice and habit of the virtues, free from the dominion of vice; and particularly by the practice of industry and frugality, free from debt, which exposes a man to confinement, and a species of slavery to his creditors." It is in the *Autobiography* also that Franklin states that he filled the spaces between the remarkable days in the calendar in his *Poor Richard's Almanac* with proverbial sentences, chiefly such as inculcated industry and frugality, "as the means," he declared, "of procuring wealth, and thereby securing virtue; it being more difficult for a man in want, to act always honestly, as, to use here one of those proverbs, *it is hard for an empty sack to stand upright.*"[1]

[1] Franklin was as fearless in applying his ethical principles to himself as to others. After telling his sister Jane in a letter, dated Dec. 30, 1770, that he trusted that no apprehension of removal from his office as Postmaster would make the least alteration in his political conduct, he uses these striking words: "My rule, in which I have always found satisfaction, is, never to turn aside in public affairs through views of private interest; but to go straight forward in doing what appears to me right at the time, leaving the consequences with Providence. What in my younger days enabled me more easily to walk upright, was, that I had a trade, and that I knew I could live upon little; and thence (never having had views of making a fortune) I was free from avarice, and contented with the plentiful supplies my business afforded me. And now it is still more easy for me

This prudential view of morality also found utterance in other forms in the writings of Franklin. In the first of the two graceful dialogues between Philocles, the Man of Reason and Virtue, and Horatio, the Man of Pleasure, which appeared in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, the former warns the latter in honeyed words that he would lose even as a man of pleasure, if, in the pursuit of pleasure, he did not practice self-denial, by taking as much care of his future as his present happiness, and not building one upon the ruins of the other; all of which, of course, was more epigrammatically embodied in that other injunction of Poor Richard, "Deny self for self's sake." No wonder that Horatio was so delighted with a theory of self-denial, which left him still such a comfortable margin for sensual enjoyment, that, when Philocles bids him good night, he replies: "Adieu! thou enchanting Reasoner!"

"Money makes men virtuous, Virtue makes them happy"; this is perhaps an unfair way of summarizing Franklin's moral precepts, but it is not remote from fairness. "Truth and Sincerity," he had written in his *Journal of a Voyage from London to Philadelphia*, when he was but twenty years of age, "have a certain distinguishing native lustre about them, which cannot be perfectly counterfeited; they are like fire and flame, that cannot be painted." It would have been well for the moralist of later years to have remembered this statement when he made up his mind to contract the habit of moral perfection. His Milton, from which he borrowed the *Hymn to the Creator* that is a part of his *Articles of Belief and Acts of Religion*, might have told him,

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to preserve my freedom and integrity, when I consider that I am almost at the end of my journey, and therefore need less to complete the expense of it; and that what I now possess, through the blessing of God, may, with tolerable economy, be sufficient for me (great misfortunes excepted), though I should add nothing more to it by any office or employment whatsoever."

"Virtue could see to do what Virtue would
By her own radiant light, though sun and moon
Were in the flat sea sunk,"

or in those other words from the same strains of supernal melody,

"If Virtue feeble were
Heaven itself would stoop to her."

In teaching and pursuing a system of morals, which was nothing but a scheme of enlightened selfishness, dependent for its aliment upon pecuniary ease and habit, he was simply faithful to a general conception of life and character entirely too earthbound and grovelling to satisfy those higher intuitions and ideals which, be the hard laws of our material being what they may, not only never permit our grosser natures to be at peace, but reject with utter disdain the suggestion that they and our vices and infirmities are but offshoots of the same parent stock of selfishness. It cannot be denied that, as a general rule, a man with some money is less urgently solicited to commit certain breaches of the moral law than a man with none, or that we should be in a bad way, indeed, if we did not have the ply of habit as well as the whisper of conscience to assist us in the struggle between good and evil that is ever going on in our own breasts. But the limited freedom from temptation, secured by the possession of money, and the additional capacity for resisting temptation, bred by good habits, are, it is hardly necessary to say, foundations too frail to support alone the moral order of the universe. Beyond money, however conducive it may be in some respects to diminished temptation, there must be something to sweeten the corrupting influence of money. Beyond good habits, however desirable as aids to virtue, there must be something to create and sustain good habits. This thing no

merely politic sense of moral necessity can ever be. Franklin's idea of supplying our languid moral energies with a system of moral practice as material as a go-cart or a swimming bladder is one, it is safe to say, upon which neither he nor anyone else could build a character that would, as Charles Townsend might have said, be anything but "a habit of lute string—a mere thing for summer wear." His *Art of Virtue* was a spurious, pinchbeck, shoddy substitute for the real virtue which has its home in our uninstructed as well as our instructed moral impulses; and for one man, who would be made virtuous by it, ten, we dare say, would be likely to be made shallow formalists or canting scamps. It is a pity that Poor Richard did not make more of that other time-honored maxim, "Virtue is its own reward."

Indeed, we shrewdly suspect that even Franklin's idea that he was such a debtor to his factitious system of moral practice was not much better than a conceit. The improvement in his moral character, after he first began to carry the virtues around in his pocket, is, we think, far more likely to have been due to the natural decline of youthful waywardness and dissent, the discipline of steady labor, the settling and sober effects of domestic life and the wider vision in every respect in our relations to the world which comes to us with our older years. It is but just to Franklin to say that, even before he adopted his "little artifice," his character as respects the virtues, which he specifically names as having had a hand in producing the constant felicity of his life, namely, Temperance, Industry, Frugality, Sincerity and Justice was, so far as Temperance, Industry and Frugality were concerned, exceptionally good, and, so far as Sincerity and Justice were concerned, not subject to any ineffaceable reproach. In truth, even he, we imagine, would have admitted with a laugh, accompanied perhaps by a humorous story, that the period of his life, before his dream

of moral perfection was formed, when he was so temperate as to be known to his fellow printers in London as the "Water American," and to be able to turn from the common diet to the vegetarian, and back again, without the slightest inconvenience, would compare quite favorably with the period of his life, after his dream of moral perfection had been formed, when he had to confess on one occasion to Polly Stevenson that he had drunk more at a venison feast than became a philosopher, and on another to his friend, John Bartram that, if he could find in any Italian travels a recipe for making Parmesan cheese, it would give him more satisfaction than a transcript of any inscription from any old stone whatever. How far the effect of his moral regimen was to strengthen the virtues of Silence, Resolution, Moderation, Cleanliness and Tranquillity we lack sufficient materials for a judgment. These, assuming that Cleanliness must have gone along with such an eager propensity for swimming as his, were all native virtues of his anyhow we should say. But as to Chastity the invigorating quality of the regimen is certainly open to the most serious doubt. There is only too much in the correspondence which has survived him to give color to the statement of John Adams that even at the age of seventy-odd he had neither lost his love of beauty nor his taste for it. When we bear this in mind and recall what he had to say in the *Autobiography* about the "hard-to-be-governed passion of youth," which frequently hurried him into intrigues with low women that fell in his way before he resolved to acquire the habit of chastity with the aid of his book, we realize that the artificial scaffolding, which he proposed to build up around his character, reasonably enough broke down at just the point where the natural vigor of his character was the weakest.

In point of sexual morality, Franklin was no better than the Europe of the eighteenth century; distinctly

worse than the America of that century. His domestic affections were uncommonly strong, but the notable peculiarity about his domestic life is that he was not a whit less soberly dutiful in his irregular than in his regular family connections, and always acted as if the nuptial ceremony was a wholly superfluous form, so far as a proper sense of marital or paternal obligation, or the existence of deep, unreserved affection, upon the part of a husband or father, went. His lack of scruples in this respect almost reminds us of the question put by his own Polly Baker, when she was prosecuted the fifth time for giving birth to a bastard: "Can it be a crime (in the nature of things, I mean) to add to the king's subjects, in a new country, that really wants people?" Apparently no ceremony of any kind ever preceded his union with Deborah, though accompanied by circumstances of cohabitation and acknowledgment which unquestionably rendered it a valid, binding marriage, in every respect, under the liberal laws of Pennsylvania. He simply remarks in the *Autobiography*, "I took her to wife, September 1, 1730." The artlessness with which he extended the full measure of a father's recognition to William Franklin excited comment abroad as well as at home, and, together with the political wounds inflicted by him upon the official arrogance and social pride of the Proprietary Party in Pennsylvania, was mainly responsible for the opprobrium in which his memory was held in the higher social circles of Philadelphia long after his death. So far as we know, there is nothing in his utterances or writings to indicate that the birth of William Franklin ever caused him the slightest shame or embarrassment. His dignity of character, in its way, it has been truly said by Sydney George Fisher, was as natural and instinctive as that of Washington, and, in its relations to illegitimacy, for which he was answerable, seems to have felt the lack of conventional support as little as our first

parents, in their pristine state, did the lack of fig leaves. He accepted his natural son and William Temple Franklin, William's natural son, exactly as if both had come recommended to his outspoken affection by betrothal, honest wedding ring and all. The idea that any stigma attached to either, or that they stood upon any different footing from his legitimate daughter, Sarah Bache and her children, was something that his mind does not appear to have harbored at all. His attitude towards them was as unblushingly natural and demonstrative, to get back to the Garden of Eden, as the mutual caresses of Adam and Eve before the Fall of Man. William was born a few months after the marriage of Franklin and Deborah, and his father, so far as we can see, took him under his roof with as little constraint as if his introduction had been duly provided for in the marriage contract. Indeed, John Bigelow, who is always disposed, in the spirit of Franklin's own limping lines on Deborah, to deem all his Joan's faults "exceedingly small," rather ludicrously observes: "William may therefore be said to have been born in wedlock, though he was not reputed to be the son of Mrs. Franklin." So identified did he become with all the other members of Franklin's household that Franklin in his letters not only frequently conveyed "Billy's" duty to his "mother" and "Billy's" love to his "sister" but on one occasion at least even "Billy's" duty to his "grandmother," Mrs. Read, the mother of Mrs. Franklin. As the boy outgrew his pony, of which we obtain a pleasant glimpse in a "lost" notice in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, we find Franklin in a letter to his own mother, Abiah Franklin, in which he couples the name of "Billy" in the most natural way with that of his daughter Sally, saying: "Will is now nineteen years of age, a tall proper Youth, and much of a Beau." It was with William Franklin, when Governor of New Jersey, that Sally took refuge at the time that her father's

house in Philadelphia was threatened with destruction by a Stamp Act mob; and it was to him shortly afterwards, when the tide of popular approval was again running in favor of Franklin, then the agent of Pennsylvania at London, that she dispatched these joyful words: "Dear Brother:—*The Old Ticket forever! We have it by 34 votes! God bless our worthy and noble agent, and all his family!*" Through the influence of his father the son obtained a provincial commission which brought him some military experience, and also filled the office of Postmaster at Philadelphia, and afterwards the office of Clerk of the General Assembly of Pennsylvania. He was with Franklin when the latter sent his kite on its memorable flight into the skies; when he visited Braddock's camp; and when he conducted his military expedition against the murderous Indians. When Franklin sailed for England in 1757, William accompanied him with the view of obtaining a license from the Inns of Court, in which he had already been entered by the former, to practice as a barrister. Abroad, he still remained his father's inseparable companion, living with him, accompanying him in his travelling excursions, attending him, when he was so signally honored at Cambridge and Oxford, even poring with him over the parish records and gravestones at Ecton from which Franklin sought to rescue such information as he could about his humble ancestors, who could not have excited his curiosity more keenly, if they had all been Princes of the Blood. What the two learned at Ecton of the abilities and public spirit of Thomas, an uncle of Franklin, and a man of no little local prominence, suggested such a close resemblance between the uncle and nephew that William Franklin remarked: "Had he died on the same day, one might have supposed a transmigration." Alexander Carlyle in his *Autobiography* has something to say about an occasion at Doctor Robertson's house in Edinburgh when

the pair as well as Hume, Dr. Cullen, Adam Smith and others were present. The son, Carlyle tells us, "was open and communicative, and pleased the company better than his father; and some of us observed indications of that decided difference of opinion between father and son which in the American War alienated them altogether." The favorable impression made by William Franklin on this company at this period of his life, he also made on William Strahan, of whom we shall have much more to say. "Your son," Strahan wrote to Franklin's wife, "I really think one of the prettiest young gentlemen I ever knew from America." Indeed, even in extreme old age the handsome presence, courtly manners and quick intelligence of William Franklin won their way at any social gathering. Speaking of an occasion on which he had met him, Crabbe Robinson says in his *Diary*, "Old General Franklin, son of the celebrated Benjamin was of the party. He is eighty-four years of age, has a courtier-like mien, and must have been a very fine man. He is now very animated and interesting, but does not at all answer to the idea one would naturally form of the son of the great Franklin."[1] A few

[1] In a paper on William Franklin, read before the New Jersey Historical Society on Sept. 27, 1848, William A. Whitehead sketches him in this manner: "He was of a cheerful, facetious disposition; could narrate well entertaining stories to please his friends; was engaging in his manners, and possessed good conversational powers. He lived in the recollection of those who saw him in New Jersey as a man of strong passions, fond of convivial pleasures, well versed in the ways of the world, and, at one period of his life not a stranger to the gallantries which so frequently marred the character of the man of that age. He was above the common size, remarkably handsome, strong and athletic, though subject to gout towards the close of his life." His writings, Whitehead thought, though perhaps less remarkable than might be expected from his advantages of education and association, gave evidence of literary attainments which compared favorably with those of most of the prominent men of that day in the Colonies. If *The Historical Review of the Constitution and Government of Pennsylvania from its Origin* is one of them, as has been supposed, we can only say that it at least hardly deserves such praise. The unassimilated

days after the departure of Franklin from England in August, 1762, the son was married to Miss Elizabeth Downes, of St. James Street, "a very agreeable West India lady," if her father-in-law may be believed. Before the marriage took place, he had been appointed, in the thirty-second year of his age, Governor of New Jersey. If the appointment was made, as has been supposed, to detach Franklin from the Colonial cause, it failed, of course, to produce any such result, but it did have the effect of completely bringing over William Franklin to the Loyalist side, when the storm finally broke, and Franklin pledged his life, his fortune and his sacred honor to the patriot cause. As the Revolution drew on, William Franklin became a partisan of the British Government, and, when he still held fast to his own office, in spite of the dismissal of his father from his office as Deputy Postmaster-General for the Colonies, Franklin wrote to him bluntly: "But you, who are a thorough Courtier, see everything with Government Eyes." The son even disregarded what was practically a request from the father that he should give up an office, which was becoming more and more complicated with the arbitrary measures of the English Ministry, and had been year after year a drain upon the purse of the father. Then followed his ignominious arrest as a Tory by the New Jersey Assembly, his defiant vaunt "*Pro Rege* and *Patria* was the motto I assumed, when I first commenced my political life, and I am resolved to retain it till death shall put an end to my mortal existence," his breach with his father, his rancorous activity as the President of the Board of Associated Loyalists, which drew down on him the suspicion of having abetted at least one murderous outrage, and his subsequent abandonment of

material scattered through its pages reminds us of nothing so much as feather pellets and fragments of bone that have passed unchanged through the gastric tract of a hawk.

America for England, where he died long after the war, a pensioner of the British Crown. With the breach between father and son, ended forever the visits that the members of the Franklin family in Philadelphia had been in the habit of paying from time to time to the Colonial Governor, the personal intercourse between the two, which, upon the part of the father, we are told by William Strahan, was at once that of a friend, a brother and an intimate and easy companion, and such filial letters as the one, for example, in which William Franklin wrote to Franklin that he was extremely obliged to him for his care in supplying him with money, and should ever have a grateful sense of that with the other numberless indulgences that he had received from his parental affection. After the restoration of peace between the two warring countries, overtures of reconciliation were made by William Franklin. "I . . . am glad," his father wrote, "to find that you desire to revive the affectionate Intercourse, that formerly existed between us. It will be very agreeable to me; indeed nothing has ever hurt me so much and affected me with such keen Sensations, as to find myself deserted in my old Age by my only Son; and not only deserted, but to find him taking up Arms against me, in a Cause, wherein my good Fame, Fortune and Life were all at Stake." Then with an uncertain touch of the native sense of justice, which was so deeply seated in his breast, he continued: "I ought not to blame you for differing in Sentiment with me in Public Affairs. We are Men, all subject to Errors. Our Opinions are not in our own Power; they are form'd and govern'd much by Circumstances, that are often as inexplicable as they are irresistible. Your Situation was such that few would have censured your remaining Neuter, *tho' there are Natural Duties which precede political ones, and cannot be extinguish'd by them.*" Responding to a statement in this same letter that the writer would be glad to see him

when convenient, but would not have him come to Paris at that time, William Franklin had a brief interview with his father at Southampton, when the latter was returning, after the restoration of peace between Great Britain and the United States, full of gratified patriotism, as well as of years and infirmities, to the land from which the son was an outcast. That immedicable wound, however, was not to be healed by one or even by many interviews, and, while Franklin did subsequently devise his lands in Nova Scotia to William Franklin and release him from certain debts, he could not refrain from a bitter fling in doing so. "The part he acted against me in the late war, which is of public notoriety," the will ran, "will account for my leaving him no more of an estate he endeavoured to deprive me of."

Again that remorseless moral system, in comparison with which the flimsy moral system of the *Autobiography* is, to use Bismarck's figure, but a lath painted to look like iron, had reminded one, who had had the temerity to violate its ordinances, that what is now as luscious as locusts may shortly be as bitter as coloquintida.

Surely there are few things in history more pathetic than that the relationship, for which the father had set aside the world and the world's law, and to which the incalculable workings of human love had almost communicated the genuineness and dignity of moral legitimacy, should have been the one thing to turn to ashes upon the lips of a life blessed with prosperity and happiness almost beyond the measure of any that the past has brought home to us![1]

[1] The judgment of Franklin himself as to how far his life had been a fortunate one was freely expressed in a letter to his friend John Sargent, dated Jan. 27, 1783. "Mrs. Sargent and the good Lady, her Mother," he said, "are very kind in wishing me more happy Years. I ought to be satisfy'd with those Providence has already been pleas'd to afford me, being now in my seventy-eighth; a long Life to pass without any uncommon Misfortune, the greater part of it in Health and Vigor of Mind and

It has been suggested that Franklin had another natural child in the wife of John Foxcroft. In a letter to the former, Foxcroft acquaints him that "his daughter" had been safely brought to bed, and had presented the writer with a sweet little girl, and in several letters to Foxcroft Franklin speaks of Mrs. Foxcroft as "my daughter." "God send my Daughter a good time, and you a Good Boy," are the words of one of them. The suggestion has been rejected by Albert Henry Smyth, the accomplished editor of Franklin's writings, on chronological grounds which, it seems to us, are by no means conclusive. The term, "daughter," however, standing alone, would certainly, under any circumstances, be largely deprived of its significance by the fact that Franklin, in his intercourse with other women than Mrs. Foxcroft, seems in the course of his life to have been addressed, in both English and French, by every paternal appellation from Pappy to *Très cher Papa* known to the language of endearment.[1] Moreover, so singularly free from self-consciousness was he in relation to his own sexual vagaries, so urgent were his affectionate impulses, that it is hard to believe that he could have been the father of such an illegitimate daughter when there is no evidence to show that, aside from a little concession to the jealousy of Mrs. Franklin, he treated her exactly as he did his acknowledged daughter, Sally.

Body, near Fifty Years of it in continu'd Possession of the Confidence of my Country, in public Employments, and enjoying the Esteem and affectionate, friendly Regard of many wise and good Men and Women, in every Country where I have resided. For these Mercies and Blessings I desire to be thankful to God, whose Protection I have hitherto had, and I hope for its Continuance to the End, which now cannot be far distant."

[1] For instance, in a letter to Elizabeth Partridge Franklin signs himself "Your affectionate Papah," and in a letter to Madam Conway, "Your affectionate Father (as you do me the Honor to call me)," and in a letter to Miss Flainville, "Your loving Papa."

The unsophisticated relations of Franklin to William Franklin were also his relations to William Temple Franklin, who was born in England, when his father was in that country with Franklin during the latter's first mission abroad. The mother of his father is unknown, and so is his own. Silence was one of the virtues enjoined on Franklin by his little book, and was an innate attribute of his strong character besides. The case was certainly one, in which, if he had been reproached by his father, William Franklin could have found an extenuating example very near at hand, even if not very readily available for the purposes of recrimination. But there is nothing to lead us to believe that Franklin was more concerned about the second bar sinister in his coat of arms than the first. On the contrary, his affection appropriated his little grandson with a promptitude which reminds us of the story told in one of his letters to his wife about the boy who asked another boy, when the latter was crying over a pennyworth of spilt vinegar, for fear that his mother would whip him, "Have you then got ne'er a Grandmother?" Almost, if not, from the very beginning, Franklin, and not William, was Temple's real father, and, after William became estranged from Franklin, the grandson thenceforth occupied the place in the heart of the latter which the son had previously occupied, or one, if anything, even warmer. When William was appointed Governor of New Jersey, and sailed away with his bride to his province, Temple, then about two years old, was left in London. As he grew older, he was placed by his grandfather, after the return of the grandfather to England in 1764, in a school near London from which he often came to visit the latter at Mrs. Stevenson's house at No. 7 Craven Street. After one of these visits, Franklin writes to William, "Temple has been at home with us during the Christmas Vacation from School. He improves continually, and more

and more engages the Regard of all that are acquainted with him, by his pleasing, sensible, manly Behaviour." On another occasion, in settling an account with William Franklin he says proudly, after referring to outlays required by the maintenance and education of Temple, "But that his Friends will not grudge when they see him." For a time, Temple was an inmate of the Craven Street House. When Franklin returned to Philadelphia in 1775, he took him with him, and turned him over to William Franklin, whose family name the youth, until then known as William Temple, assumed for the future. Temple, however, after spending some happy months in New Jersey, was soon again with his grandfather at Philadelphia for the purpose of attending the College of Philadelphia, and here he was when Franklin was on the point of setting out on his mission to France. When he did sail, Temple, then sixteen or seventeen years of age, and Benjamin Franklin Bache, the oldest son of Franklin's daughter, Sally, a boy of seven, accompanied him; it being the purpose of Franklin to place Temple at some foreign university, with the design of ultimately making a lawyer of him, and Benjamin at some school in Paris.[1] Governor Franklin, who was a prisoner in Connecticut, did not hear of the departure of his father until several weeks after the three had sailed. "If," he wrote to his wife, "the old gentleman has taken the boy with him, I hope it is only to put him into some foreign university."

Abroad, the idea of giving Temple a legal education was first deferred, and then finally dismissed. His grandfather, with an infinite amount to do, and with no clerical help provided by Congress to assist him in doing it,

[1] In a letter from Paris to Jan Ingenhousz, dated Apr. 26, 1777, Franklin told Ingenhousz that he had brought Temple with him from America "partly to finish his Education, having a great Affection for him, and partly to have his Assistance as a Secretary."

was constrained to employ him as his private secretary, without any aid except that of a French clerk, who was paid a salary of fifty louis per annum. Engaging in person, endowed to some degree with the vivacity of his grandfather and father, speaking French much better than his grandfather, possessed of fair abilities and attentive to his duties, he appears to have filled the post of secretary creditably, though Congress, for one reason or another, could never be induced to recognize his appointment officially. Later on, when John Adams, John Jay, Henry Laurens and Franklin were appointed with Jefferson, who declined to serve, Commissioners to negotiate peace with Great Britain, he became their Secretary at an annual salary of one thousand pounds, but the vain, pathetic efforts of the grandfather, both before and after his return to America from France, when too much time had been lost for Temple to resume the thought of taking up the study of law, to obtain some secondary diplomatic, or other, position in the public service for the grandson, make up one of the despicable chapters in the history of Congress. Remarkable as it now seems, at one time there was even an effort on foot in America to oust Temple from his position as the private secretary of Franklin. It called forth a remonstrance in a letter from the latter to Richard Bache, his son-in-law, which is not only deeply interesting because of its stirring, measured force of expression, but also because of the tenderness for Temple which it manifests.

I am surprised to hear [he said] that my grandson, Temple Franklin, being with me, should be an objection against me, and that there is a cabal for removing him. Methinks it is rather some merit, that I have rescued a valuable young man from the danger of being a Tory, and fixed him in honest republican Whig principles; as I think, from the integrity of his disposition, his industry, his early sagacity, and uncommon

abilities for business, he may in time become of great service to his country. It is enough that I have lost my *son;* would they add my *grandson?* An old man of seventy, I undertook a winter voyage at the command of the Congress, and for the public service, with no other attendant to take care of me. I am continued here in a foreign country, where, if I am sick, his filial attention comforts me, and, if I die, I have a child to close my eyes and take care of my remains. His dutiful behaviour towards me, and his diligence and fidelity in business, are both pleasing and useful to me.

The same indulgent estimate of Temple's capacity is also indicated in a letter to Samuel Huntington in which Franklin requested Congress to take his grandson under his protection. After stating that Temple seemed to be qualified for public foreign affairs "by a sagacity and judgment above his years, and great diligence and activity, exact probity, a genteel address, a facility in speaking well the French tongue, and all the knowledge of business to be obtained by a four years' constant employment in the secretary's office," he added: "After all the allowance I am capable of making for the partiality of a parent to his offspring, I cannot but think he may in time make a very able foreign minister for Congress, in whose service his fidelity may be relied on."

A thing most earnestly desired by Franklin was the marriage of Temple to a daughter of Madame Brillon, who sometimes referred to Temple as "M. Franklinet." So ardent was the chase upon his part that he even assured the mother that he was ready to spend the rest of his life in France if the only obstacle to the union was the fear that Temple would return to America with him. Mademoiselle Brillon does not seem to have been inclined to let Temple despair but her parents were unwilling to give their consent. Madame Brillon declared that it would have been sweet to her heart and most agreeable to M. Brillon to have been able to form a union which

would have made but one family of the Brillons and the Franklins, and that they liked Temple, and believed that he had everything requisite to make a man distinguished, and to render a woman happy, but they must have, she said, a son-in-law who would be in a situation to succeed her husband in his office, and who was also a man of their religion. This was in reply to a letter from Franklin in which he proposed the match, and had said of Temple, "He is still young, and perhaps the partiality of a father has made me think too highly of him, but it seems to me that he has the stuff in him to make in time a distinguished man." After reading the letters from Franklin about his grandson, we can readily believe that Lafayette did not exaggerate when he wrote to Washington that Franklin loved his grandchild better than anything else in the world. Even when Temple was some twenty-four years of age, Franklin in one of his letters addresses him as "My Dear Child" and signs himself, "Your loving Grandfather." While the two remained in France, the old man improved every opportunity to advance the fortunes of the younger one, matrimonial or otherwise. When his legs grew too gouty to enable him to keep pace in mounting the stairways at Versailles with the other foreign ministers, it was by Temple that he was represented at Court *levées*. By him Temple was also introduced to Voltaire, and enjoyed the unusual honor of having that great man with an expressive gesture say to him: "My child, God and Liberty! Recollect those two words." To Temple, too, was delegated by our envoys the office of handing to Vergennes the memorial proposing an alliance between France, Spain and the United States, and it was he who actually delivered to Lafayette, on behalf of his grandfather, the handsome sword with which Congress had honored the former. When the olive branch extended by William Franklin to Franklin was accepted by him, Temple was sent over by

him to William in England for a season as the best peace-offering in the gift of the sender. "I send your Son over to pay his Duty to you," he wrote to William. "You will find him much improv'd. He is greatly esteem'd and belov'd in this Country, and will make his Way anywhere." A letter written to Temple, during his absence on this occasion, by his grandfather, in which his grandfather pathetically complains of his silence, is another minor proof of the devotion felt by Franklin for Temple. And there is every reason to believe that the feeling was fully returned; for even the prospect of being united to the daughter of Madame Brillon, with the full sanction of his grandfather, was not sufficient to reconcile Temple to the thought of being left behind in France by him. So far from being heeded by Congress was the request of Franklin that some public office be conferred upon Temple that the latter was even displaced in his secretaryship by another person without a line of notice from Congress to his grandfather. And when the two arrived in America, after they had lingered long enough at Southampton for William Franklin to transfer to his son a farm of some six hundred acres at Rancocas, in the State of New Jersey, purchased for Temple by Franklin, Temple fared no better at the hands of the American Government than in France. His efforts, first, to secure the Secretaryship of the Federal Convention of 1787, and, afterwards, to obtain some appointment under the administration of Washington, met with no success, despite all that his grandfather could do for him. For a while he lived on his *Terre*, as Franklin called it, at Rancocas, but, after the death of Franklin, who did not forget him in his will, he became restless, and wandered back to the Old World, where he delayed so long the publication of his grandfather's writings, bequeathed to him by the latter, that he was strongly but unjustly suspected for a time of having been bribed by the British

Government to suppress them. His slender literary qualifications for giving the proper perspective to such a mass of material had simply stood appalled at the magnitude of their task.

CHAPTER II

Franklin's Religious Beliefs

CLOSELY akin to Franklin's system of morals were his views about Religion. Scattered through his writings are sentences full of gratitude to God for His favor in lifting him up from such a low to such a high estate, in bringing him substantially unscathed through the graver dangers and baser temptations of human life, and in affording him the assurance that the divine goodness, of which he had received such signal proofs in his career, would not cease with his death. In the *Autobiography*, after alluding in modest terms to the poverty and obscurity, in which he was born and bred, and the affluence and reputation subsequently won by him, he says:

> And now I speak of thanking God, I desire with all humility to acknowledge that I owe the mentioned happiness of my past life to His kind providence, which lead me to the means I used and gave them success. My belief of this induces me to *hope*, though I must not *presume*, that the same goodness will still be exercised toward me, in continuing that happiness, or enabling me to bear a fatal reverse, which I may experience as others have done; the complexion of my future fortune being known to Him only in whose power it is to bless to us even our afflictions.

These words, though they occur in the work which Franklin tells us was written when he was not dressed

for a ball, he well knew would be read by other eyes than those of the son for whom they were primarily intended; but one of his familiar letters to his wife, written some years before the *Autobiography* was begun, contains expressions equally devout; associated on this occasion, however, with the aspirations for the welfare of his fellow creatures which constituted the real religion of his life.

God is very good to us both in many Respects [he wrote]. Let us enjoy his Favours with a thankful & chearful Heart; and, as we can make no direct Return to him, show our Sense of his Goodness to us, by continuing to do Good to our Fellow Creatures, without Regarding the Returns they make us, whether Good or Bad. For they are all his Children, tho' they may sometimes be our Enemies. The Friendships of this World are changeable, uncertain, transitory Things; but his Favour, if we can secure it, is an Inheritance forever.

With respect to the successful issue, to which a manifest Providence had, after so many vicissitudes and perils, conducted the American Revolution, he wrote to Josiah Quincy in words as solemn as a *Te Deum:*

Considering all our Mistakes and Mismanagements, it is wonderful we have finished our Affair so well, and so soon. Indeed, I am wrong in using that Expression, "*We have finish'd our Affair so well.* Our Blunders have been many, and they serve to manifest the Hand of Providence more clearly in our Favour; so that we may much more properly say, *These are Thy Doings, O Lord, and they are marvellous in our Eyes.*

Franklin might well have seen the hand of Providence in the momentous result for which he had dared so much and labored so long, and which meant so much to human history, but its shaping power over the destiny of even such a Murad the Unlucky as his hapless nephew, Benny Mecom, is recognized by him in a letter to his beloved sister, Jane Mecom, and her husband when Benny had gone

off to seek his fortune as a printer in Antigua. "After all," he concludes, "having taken care to do *what appears to be for the best*, we must submit to God's providence, which orders all things really for the best." On another occasion, in an ingenious paper on Water Spouts, the sage philosopher, seeing in the benign manner in which the waters of the ocean rid themselves of salt, in the process of evaporation, the same God that the poor Indian sees in the clouds or hears in the wind, impressively exclaims: "He who hath proportioned and given proper Qualities to all Things, was not unmindful of this. Let us adore Him with Praise and Thanksgiving." There are certain human feelings which rise in moments of uncommon stress or fervor from the profoundest depths of our being to our lips and take on the form and rhythm of sonorous religious utterance, if for no better reason, because no other language is lofty or musical enough to serve aptly the purposes of such supreme occasions; and this is true even of an individuality so meagrely spiritual as that of Franklin.

Other expressions of the same character furnish a religious or quasi-religious setting to Franklin's thoughts upon his own dissolution. To his brave and cheerful spirit, which experienced so little difficulty in accommodating its normal philosophy to all the fixed facts and laws of existence, death was as natural as life—a thing not to be invited before its time but to be accepted with unmurmuring serenity when it came. The only certain things in this world, he said in his homespun way, are death and taxes.

It is the will of God and nature [he wrote in his fifty-first year to Elizabeth Hubbard, after the death of his brother John] that these mortal bodies be laid aside, when the soul is to enter into real life. This is rather an embryo state, a preparation for living. A man is not completely born until

he be dead. Why then should we grieve, that a new child is born among the immortals, a new member added to their happy society?

We are spirits. That bodies should be lent us, while they can afford us pleasure, assist us in acquiring knowledge, or in doing good to our fellow creatures, is a kind and benevolent act of God. When they become unfit for these purposes, and afford us pain instead of pleasure, instead of an aid become an incumbrance, and answer none of the intentions for which they were given, it is equally kind and benevolent, that a way is provided by which we may get rid of them. Death is that way. We ourselves, in some cases, prudently choose a partial death. A mangled painful limb, which cannot be restored, we willingly cut off. He who plucks out a tooth, parts with it freely, since the pain goes with it; and he, who quits the whole body, parts at once with all pains and possibilities of pains and diseases which it was liable to, or capable of making him suffer.

Our friend and we were invited abroad on a party of pleasure, which is to last forever. His chair was ready first, and he is gone before us. We could not all conveniently start together; and why should you and I be grieved at this, since we are soon to follow, and know where to find him? Adieu.

It was a sane, bright conception of human destiny indeed which could convert the grim ferryman of the Styx into little more than an obsequious chairman, waiting at the portals of life until it suited the convenience of his fare to issue from them.

That Being [he wrote to George Whitefield] who gave me Existence, and thro' almost three-score Years has been continually showering his Favours upon me, whose very Chastisements have been Blessings to me; can I doubt that he loves me? And, if he loves me, can I doubt that he will go on to take care of me, not only here but hereafter? This to some may seem Presumption; to me it appears the best grounded Hope; Hope of the Future, built on Experience of the Past.

The same thought is repeated in a letter to William Strahan, followed, however, by the dig which he rarely failed to give to his Tory friend, "Straney," when he had the chance:

God has been very good to you, from whence I think you may be *assured* that he loves you, and that he will take at least as good care of your future Happiness as he has done of your present. What Assurance of the *Future* can be better founded than that which is built on Experience of the *Past?* Thank me for giving you this Hint, by the Help of which you may die as chearfully as you live. If you had Christian Faith, *quantum suff.*, this might not be necessary; but as matters are it may be of Use.

This hopeful outlook continued until the end. In a letter to his "dear old friend," George Whatley, which was written about five years before the writer's death, he adds a resource borrowed from his scientific knowledge to the other resources of his tranquil optimism.

You see [he said] I have some reason to wish, that, in a future State, I may not only be *as well as I was*, but a little better. And I hope it; for I, too, with your Poet, *trust in God*. And when I observe, that there is great Frugality, as well as Wisdom, in his Works, since he has been evidently sparing both of Labour and Materials; for by the various wonderful Inventions of Propagation, he has provided for the continual peopling his World with Plants and Animals, without being at the Trouble of repeated new Creations; and by the natural Reduction of compound Substances to their original Elements, capable of being employ'd in new Compositions, he has prevented the Necessity of creating new Matter; so that the Earth, Water, Air, and perhaps Fire, which being compounded form Wood, do, when the Wood is dissolved, return, and again become Air, Earth, Fire, and Water; I say that, when I see nothing annihilated, and not even a Drop of Water wasted, I cannot suspect the Annihilation of Souls, or believe, that he will suffer the daily Waste of Millions of

Minds ready made that now exist, and put himself to the continual Trouble of making new ones. Thus finding myself to exist in the World, I believe I shall, in some Shape or other, always exist.

In a letter to M. Montaudouin in 1779, in reply to one from that friend applying to him the prayer of Horace for Augustus, he remarked: "Tho' the Form is heathen, there is good Christian Spirit in it, and I feel myself very well disposed to be content with this World, which I have found hitherto a tolerable good one, & to wait for Heaven (which will not be the worse for keeping) as long as God pleases." But later on, when seven more years of waning strength had passed, he wrote to his friend Jonathan Shipley, the Bishop of St. Asaph's:

I still have Enjoyment in the Company of my Friends; and, being easy in my Circumstances, have many Reasons to like living. But the Course of Nature must soon put a period to my present Mode of Existence. This I shall submit to with less Regret, as, having seen during a long Life a good deal of this World, I feel a growing Curiosity to be acquainted with some other; and can chearfully, with filial Confidence, resign my Spirit to the conduct of that great and good Parent of Mankind, who created it, and who has so graciously protected and prospered me from my Birth to the present Hour.

At times, his unfailing humor or graceful fancy even plays lambently over the same stern prospect. In a letter to Mrs. Hewson, written four years before his death, he mentions cards among his amusements, and then adds:

I have indeed now and then a little compunction in reflecting that I spend time so idly; but another reflection comes to relieve me, whispering, "*You know that the soul is immortal; why then should you be such a niggard of a little time, when you*

have a whole eternity before you?" So, being easily convinced, and, like other reasonable creatures, satisfied with a small reason, when it is in favour of doing what I have a mind to do, I shuffle the cards again and begin another game.

We were long fellow labourers in the best of all works, the work of Peace," he wrote to David Hartley, when the writer was on the point of returning to America from France. "I leave you still in the field, but having finished my day's task, I am going home *to go to bed!* Wish me a good night's rest, as I do you a pleasant evening." This was but another way of expressing the thought of an earlier letter of his to George Whatley, "I look upon Death to be as necessary to our Constitution as Sleep. We shall rise refreshed in the Morning."

Your letter [he said to another friend, Thomas Jordan] reminds me of many happy days we have passed together, and the dear friends with whom we passed them; some of whom, alas! have left us, and we must regret their loss, although our Hawkesworth (the compiler of the South Sea discoveries of Capt. Cook) is become an *Adventurer* in more happy regions; and our Stanley (the eminent musician and composer) gone, "where only his own *harmony* can be exceeded."

Many of these letters, so full of peace and unflinching courage, it should be recollected, were written during hours of physical debility or grievous pain.

Every sheet of water takes the hue of the sky above it, and intermixed with these observations of Franklin, which were themselves, to say the least, fully as much the natural fruit of a remarkably equable and sanguine temperament as of religious confidence, are other observations of his upon religious subjects which were deeply colored by his practical genius, tolerant disposition and shrewd insight into the imperfections of human institutions and the shortcomings of human character. With

the purely theological and sectarian side of Religion he had no sympathy whatever. It was a source of regret to him that, at a time in his boyhood, when he was consuming books as insatiably as the human lungs consume oxygen, he should have read most of the treatises "in polemic divinity," of which his father's little library chiefly consisted. In a letter to Strahan, when he was in his thirty-ninth year, he said that he had long wanted a judicious friend in London to send him from time to time such new pamphlets as were worth reading on any subject, "religious controversy excepted." To Richard Price he imparted his belief that religious tests were invented not so much to secure Religion itself as its emoluments, and that, if Christian preachers had continued to teach as Christ and His Apostles did, without salaries, and as the Quakers did even in his day, such tests would never have existed. "When a Religion is good," he asserted, "I conceive that it will support itself; and, when it cannot support itself, and God does not take care to support, so that its Professors are oblig'd to call for the help of the Civil Power, it is a sign, I apprehend, of its being a bad one." A favorite saying of his was the saying of Richard Steele that the difference between the Church of Rome and the Church of England is that the one pretends to be infallible and the other to be never in the wrong. "Orthodoxy is my doxy and Heterodoxy your doxy," is a saying which has been attributed to him as his own. His heart went out at once to the Dunkers, when Michael Welfare, one of the founders of that sect, gave, as his reason for its unwillingness to publish the articles of its belief, the fact that it was not satisfied that this belief would not undergo some future changes for the better with further light from Heaven.

This modesty in a sect [he remarks in the *Autobiography*] is perhaps a singular instance in the history of mankind, every

other sect supposing itself in possession of all truth, and that those who differ are so far in the wrong; like a man traveling in foggy weather, those at some distance before him on the road he sees wrapped up in the fog, as well as those behind him, and also the people in the fields on each side, but near him all appears clear, tho' in truth he is as much in the fog as any of them.

The great meeting-house built at Philadelphia, when George Whitefield had worked its people into a state of religious ecstasy by his evangelistic appeals, and the circumstances, under which Franklin was elected to fill a vacancy among the Trustees, appointed to hold this building, were two things of which he speaks with obvious pleasure in the *Autobiography*. The design in erecting the edifice, he declares, was not to accommodate any particular sect but the inhabitants of Philadelphia in general, "so that even if the Mufti of Constantinople were to send a missionary to preach Mohammedanism to us, he would find a pulpit at his service." The Trustees to hold this building were each the member of some Protestant sect. In process of time, the Moravian died, and then there was opposition to the election of any other Moravian as his successor. "The difficulty then was," Franklin tells us, "how to avoid having two of some other sect, by means of the new choice.

"Several persons were named, and for that reason not agreed to. At length one mention'd me, with the observation that I was merely an honest man, and of no sect at all, which prevail'd with them to chuse me."

The manner in which Franklin came to occupy this position of sectarian detachment is also set forth in the *Autobiography*. On his father's side, he was descended from sturdy pietists, to whom the difference between one sect and another did not mean merely polemical warmth, as in Franklin's time, but the heat of the stake.

In the reign of Bloody Mary, Franklin's great-great-grandfather kept his English Bible open and suspended by tapes, under the concealing cover of a joint-stool, and, when he inverted the stool to read from the pages of the book to his family, one of his children stood at the door to give timely warning of the approach of the dreaded apparitor. In the reign of Charles the Second, the religious scruples of Franklin's father and his Uncle Benjamin, before they crossed the sea to Boston, had been strong enough to induce them to desert the soft lap of the Church of England for the harried conventicles of the despised and persecuted Non-Conformists. To the earlier Franklins Religion meant either all or much that it meant to men in the ages when not Calculating Skill, but, as Emerson tells us, Love and Terror laid the tiles of cathedrals. But Benjamin Franklin was not a scion of the sixteenth century, nor even of the seventeenth, but of the searching and skeptical eighteenth. Some of the dogmas of the creed, in which he was religiously educated by his father, such as the eternal decrees of God, election, reprobation and the like appeared to him unintelligible, others doubtful, he declares in the *Autobiography*. The consequence was that he early absented himself from the public assemblies of the Presbyterian sect in Philadelphia, Sunday being his "studying day," though he never was, he says, without some religious principles.

I never doubted, for instance, the existence of the Deity; that he made the world, and govern'd it by his Providence; that the most acceptable service of God was the doing good to man; that our souls are immortal; and that all crime will be punished, and virtue rewarded, either here or hereafter. These I esteem'd the essentials of every religion; and, being to be found in all the religions we had in our country, I respected them all, tho' with different degrees of respect, as I found them more or less mix'd with other articles, which,

without any tendency to inspire, promote, or confirm morality, serv'd principally to divide us, and make us unfriendly to one another.

And then he goes on to inform us that, as Pennsylvania increased in people, and new places of worship were continually wanted, and were generally erected by voluntary contributions, his mite for such purposes, whatever might be the sect, was never refused. This impartial attitude towards the different religious sects he maintained in every particular throughout his life, and from his point of view he had no reason to be dissatisfied with the result, if we may believe John Adams, who tells us: "The Catholics thought him almost a Catholic. The Church of England claimed him as one of them. The Presbyterians thought him half a Presbyterian, and the Friends believed him a wet Quaker." "Mr. Franklin had no—" was as far as Adams himself got in stating his own personal opinion about Franklin's religious views. To have been regarded as an adherent of every sect was a compliment that Franklin would have esteemed as second only to the declaration that he was merely an honest man and of no sect at all. It is certainly one of the most amusing facts narrated in the *Autobiography* that such a man, only a few years after religious bigotry had compelled him to fly from New England, the land for which Poor Richard, on one occasion, safely predicted a year of "*dry* Fish and *dry* Doctrine," should have been invited by Keimer, the knavish eccentric of the *Autobiography*, to become "his colleague in a project he had of setting up a new sect."

George Whitefield appears to have come nearer than anyone else to the honor of reducing Franklin to a definite religious status. For this celebrated man he seems to have felt an even warmer regard than that which he usually entertained for every clergyman who was a faithful exponent of sound morals. He begins one of his

letters to his brother, John Franklin, with a reference to Whitefield, and then he laconically adds: "He is a good Man and I love him." In the *Autobiography* he certifies that, in his opinion, Whitefield was in all his conduct "a perfectly *honest man.*" But even Whitefield's call to the unconverted, which awakened the conscience of Philadelphia to such a degree "that one could not walk thro' the town in an evening without hearing psalms sung in different families of every street," failed to bring Franklin within the great preacher's fold. "He us'd, indeed, sometimes to pray for my conversion, but never had the satisfaction of believing that his prayers were heard. Ours was a mere civil friendship, sincere on both sides, and lasted to his death." These are the statements of the *Autobiography*. And a mere civil friendship Franklin was inflexibly determined to keep it; for we learn from the same source that, when Whitefield answered an invitation to Franklin's house by saying that, if Franklin made that kind offer for Christ's sake, he would not miss of a reward, the reply promptly came back: "*Don't let me be mistaken; it was not for Christ's sake, but for your sake.*" "One of our common acquaintance," says Franklin, "jocosely remark'd, that, knowing it to be the custom of the saints, when they received any favour, to shift the burden of the obligation from off their own shoulders, and place it in heaven, I had contriv'd to fix it on earth." It may truly be said, however, that nothing is recorded of the persuasive eloquence of Whitefield more amazing than the fact that it once swept Franklin for a moment off the feet on which he stood so firmly. He had made up his mind not to contribute to one of Whitefield's charitable projects which did not meet with his approval—but let Æsop tell the story in his own characteristic way:

I happened soon after to attend one of his sermons, in the course of which I perceived he intended to finish with a col-

lection, and I silently resolved he should get nothing from me. I had in my pocket a handful of copper money, three or four silver dollars, and five pistoles in gold. As he proceeded I began to soften, and concluded to give the coppers. Another stroke of his oratory made me asham'd of that, and determin'd me to give the silver; and he finish'd so admirably, that I empty'd my pocket wholly into the collector's dish, gold and all.

But Franklin was not long in recovering his equipoise and in again wondering why Whitefield's auditors should so admire and respect him notwithstanding "his common abuse of them, by assuring them they were naturally *half beasts and half devils*." Whitefield, he thought, made a great mistake in publishing his sermons; for *litera scripta manet* and affords a full opportunity for criticism and censure. If the sermons had not been published, Whitefield's proselytes would have been left, Franklin believed, to feign for him as great a variety of excellences as their enthusiastic admiration might wish him to have possessed. A Deist, if anything, Franklin was when Whitefield first came to Philadelphia, and a Deist, if anything, he was when Whitefield left it for the last time. When the latter wrote in his *Journal*, "*M. B. was a deist, I had almost said an atheist*," Franklin, indisposed to be deprived of all religious standing, dryly commented: "That is *chalk*, I had almost said *charcoal*." A man, he tells us in the *Autobiography*, is sometimes more generous when he has but a little money than when he has plenty, perhaps through fear of being thought to have but little, and it is possible that religious faith may sometimes be influenced by the same kind of sensitiveness. The truth of the matter was that as respects theological tenets and sectarian distinctions Franklin was an incurable heretic, if such a term is appropriate to the listless indifference to all dogmas and sects rarely broken except by some

merry jest or gentle parable, like his Parable against Persecution or his Parable of Brotherly Love, with which he regarded every sour fermentation of the *odium theologicum*. When he heard that a New Englander, John Thayer, had become a Catholic, the worst that he could find it in his heart to say was: "Our ancestors from Catholic became first Church-of-England men, and then refined into Presbyterians. To change now from Presbyterianism to Popery seems to me refining backwards, from white sugar to brown." In commenting in a letter to Elizabeth Partridge, formerly Hubbard, a year or so before his own death on the death of a friend of theirs, he uses these words:

> You tell me our poor Friend Ben Kent is gone; I hope to the Regions of the Blessed, or at least to some Place where Souls are prepared for those Regions. I found my Hope on this, that tho' not so orthodox as you and I, he was an honest Man, and had his Virtues. If he had any Hypocrisy it was of that inverted kind, with which a Man is not so bad as he seems to be. And with regard to future Bliss I cannot help imagining, that Multitudes of the zealously Orthodox of different Sects, who at the last Day may flock together, in hopes of seeing (mutilated) damn'd, will be disappointed, and oblig'd to rest content with their own Salvation.

Franklin's Kingdom of Heaven was one into which there was such an abundant entrance that even his poor friend, Ben Kent, could hope to arrive there thoroughly disinfected after a brief quarantine on the road.[1] But it is in his *Conte* that the spirit of religious charity, by

[1] Kent was evidently something of a character. In a letter to his friend Mrs. Catherine Greene, in 1764, Franklin said: "Mr. Kent's compliment is a very extraordinary one, as he was obliged to kill himself and two others in order to make it; but, being killed in imagination only, they and he are all yet alive and well, thanks to God, and I hope will continue so as long as, dear Katy, your affectionate friend,

B. Franklin."

which this letter is animated, is given the sparkling, graceful form with which his fancy readily clothed its creations when form and finish were what the workmanship of the occasion required. Montrésor who is very sick, tells his curé that he has had a vision during the night which has set his mind entirely at rest as to his future. "What was your vision?" said the good priest. "I was," replied Montrésor, "at the gate of Paradise, with a crowd of people who wished to enter. And St. Peter asked each one what his religion was. One answered, 'I am a Roman Catholic.' 'Ah, well,' said St. Peter, 'enter, and take your place there among the Catholics.' Another said, that he belonged to the Anglican Church. 'Ah, well,' said St. Peter, 'enter and take your place there among the Anglicans.' Another said that he was a Quaker. 'Enter,' said St. Peter, 'and take your place among the Quakers.' Finally, my turn being come, he asked me what my religion was. 'Alas!' replied I, 'unfortunately poor Jacques Montrésor has none.' 'That is a pity,' said the Saint, 'I do not know where to place you; but enter all the same; and place yourself where you can.'"

Perhaps, however, in none of Franklin's writings is his mental attitude towards religious sects and their varied creeds and organizations disclosed with such bland *insouciance* and delicate raillery as in his letter to Mason Weems and Edward Gantt. Weems was the famous parson Weems whose legendary story of the cherry tree and the hatchet made for many years such a sublime *enfant terrible* of Washington, and Gantt was a native of Maryland who was destined in the course of time to become a chaplain of the United States Senate. In this letter, after acknowledging a letter from Weems and Gantt telling him that the Archbishop of Canterbury would not permit them to be ordained, unless they took the oath of allegiance, he says that he had obtained an

opinion from a clergyman of his acquaintance in Paris that they could not be ordained there, or that, if they were, they would be required to vow obedience to the Archbishop of Paris. He next inquired of the Pope's Nuncio whether they might not be ordained by the Catholic Bishop in America, but received the answer that the thing was impossible unless the gentlemen became Catholics. Then, after a deprecatory statement that the affair was one of which he knew very little, and that he might therefore ask questions or propose means that were improper or impracticable, he pointedly adds: "But what is the necessity of your being connected with the Church of England? Would it not be as well, if you were of the Church of Ireland?" The religion was the same, though there was a different set of Bishops and Archbishops and perhaps the Bishop of Derry, who was a man of liberal sentiments, might give them orders as of the Irish Church. If both Britain and Ireland refused them (and he was not sure that the Bishops of Denmark or Sweden would ordain them unless they became Lutherans), then, in his humble opinion, next to becoming Presbyterians, the Episcopal Clergy of America could not do better than follow the example of the first Clergy of Scotland, who, when a similar difficulty arose, assembled in the Cathedral, and the Mitre, Crosier and Robes of a Bishop being laid upon the Altar, after earnest prayers for direction in their choice, elected one of their own number; when the King said to him: "*Arise, go to the Altar, and receive your Office at the Hand of God.*" If the British Isles were sunk in the sea, he continued (and the surface of the Globe had suffered greater changes), his correspondents would probably take some such method as this, and persistence in the denial of ordination to them by the English Church came to the same thing. A hundred years later, when people were more enlightened, it would be wondered at that men in America, qualified

by their learning and piety to pray for, and instruct, their neighbors, should not be permitted to do it until they had made a voyage of six thousand miles out and home to ask leave of a cross old gentleman at Canterbury who seemed, by the account of his correspondents, to have as little regard for the souls of the People of Maryland as King William's Attorney-General Seymour had for those of the People of Virginia, when, in reply to the reminder of the Reverend Commissary Blair of William and Mary College that the latter had souls to be saved as well as the People of England, he exclaimed: "*Souls!* damn your Souls. Make Tobacco."

Here we have Franklin absolutely *in puris naturalibus* as respects the sacerdotal side of Religion, lavishing upon his correspondents in a single letter a series of half-serious, half-mocking sentiments flavored with some of his best intellectual qualities, and doubtless leaving them in a teasing state of uncertainty as to whether he intended to ridicule them or not. In the light of such a letter as this, the reader will hardly be surprised to learn that he did not quit the world until he had put on record his high opinion of heretics. After asking Benjamin Vaughan in one of his letters about a year and a half before his death, to remember him affectionately to the "honest" heretic, Doctor Priestley, he said:

> I do not call him *honest* by way of distinction; for I think all the heretics I have known have been virtuous men. They have the virtue of fortitude, or they would not venture to own their heresy; and they cannot afford to be deficient in any of the other virtues, as that would give advantage to their many enemies; and they have not, like orthodox sinners, such a number of friends to excuse or justify them.

Holding these views about heretics, it is natural that Franklin should at times have stigmatized religious bigotry as it deserved. In his *Remarks on a Late Protest*,

when he was being assailed for one of the most creditable acts of his life, his unsparing denunciation of the murder of hapless Indians by the Paxton Boys, he had a fearless word to say about "those religious Bigots, who are of all Savages the most brutish." And it would be difficult to find a terser or more graphic picture of religious discord than this in one of his letters to Jane Mecom:

> Each party abuses the other; the profane and the infidel believe both sides, and enjoy the fray; the reputation of religion in general suffers, and its enemies are ready to say, not what was said in the primitive times, Behold how these Christians love one another,—but, Mark how these Christians hate one another! Indeed, when religious people quarrel about religion or hungry people about their victuals, it looks as if they had not much of either among them.

Not only did Franklin have no sympathy with sects and their jarring pretensions but he had little patience with either doctrinal theology or ecclesiastical rites and forms of any sort. Even after he decided to keep away from public worship on Sundays, he still retained [he said], a sense of its utility, when rightly conducted, and continued to pay regularly his annual subscription to the Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia which he had attended. Later, he was induced by its pastor to sit now and then under his ministrations; once he states, as if with a slight elevation of the eyebrows, for five Sundays successively, but it all proved unedifying, since not a single moral principle was inculcated or enforced; the aim of the preacher seeming to be rather to make them good Presbyterians than good citizens. At length the devout man took for his text the following verse from the fourth chapter of the Philippians: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely or of good report, if there be any virtue, or any praise, think on these things." Now, thought Franklin, in a sermon

on such a text we cannot miss of having some of the "morality" which was to him the entire meat of religion. But the text, promising as it was, had been subjected to such merciless dessication that it resolved itself into five points only "as meant by the apostle, viz.: 1. Keeping holy the Sabbath day. 2. Being diligent in reading the holy Scriptures. 3. Attending duly the publick worship. 4. Partaking of the Sacrament. 5. Paying a due respect to God's ministers." Franklin was disgusted, gave this preacher up entirely, and returned to the use of the *Articles of Belief and Acts of Religion* which he had previously composed for his own private devotions. Subsequently, however, he was again enticed to church by the arrival in Philadelphia from Ireland of a young Presbyterian minister, named Hemphill, who preached good works rather than dogma in excellent discourses, apparently extemporaneous, and set off with an attractive voice. This minister was soon formally arraigned for heterodoxy by the old orthodox clergy who were in the habit of paying more attention to Presbyterian doctrine than Franklin was, and found a powerful champion in Franklin, who, seeing that Hemphill, while an "elegant preacher," was, for reasons that afterwards became only too patent, a poor writer, wrote several pamphlets and an article in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* in his behalf. Unfortunately, when the war of words was at its height, Hemphill, who afterwards confessed to Franklin that none of the sermons that he preached were of his own composition, was proved to have purloined a part, at any rate, of one of his sermons from Dr. Foster, of whom Pope had written,

> "Let modest Foster, if he will excel
> Ten metropolitans in preaching well."

The Synod found against him, but so agreeable to Franklin was the all too-brief taste that he had enjoyed

of good works that he adhered to Hemphill to the last. "I stuck by him, however," he says, "as I rather approv'd his giving us good sermons compos'd by others, than bad ones of his own manufacture, tho' the latter was the practice of our common teachers"; among whom he doubtless included the dreary shepherd who had made so little out of the verse in the fourth chapter of Philippians. Everything found its practical level in that mind at last. It might be added that Franklin's stand on this occasion was but in keeping with a final word of counsel which he wrote many years afterwards to his daughter Sally, when he was descending the Delaware on his way to England. After enjoining upon her especial attention her Book of Common Prayer, he continued: "Yet I do not mean you should despise sermons, even of the preachers you dislike, for the discourse is often much better than the man, as sweet and clear waters come through very dirty earth."

After the Hemphill disappointment, he ceased to attend the church in which his *protégé* had come to grief, though he continued to subscribe to the support of its minister for many years. He took a pew in an Episcopal Church, Christ Church, and here he was careful that his family should regularly worship every Sunday, notwithstanding the fact that he was too busy again with his studies on that day to worship there himself, or placed too much confidence in his *Art of Virtue* and *Articles of Belief and Acts of Religion* to feel the need for doing so. Here too his daughter and his son Francis who died in childhood were baptized, and here his wife and himself were buried. While he rarely attended the services at this church, he was one of its mainstays in every pecuniary sense.

In more than one particular, Franklin was lax in France where he was only liberal in America. At any rate he was even less of a Sabbatarian in the former country than he was in the latter. As respects observance of the

Sabbath, he fully fell in with French usages and was in the habit of setting apart the day as a day for attending the play or opera, entertaining his friends, or amusing himself with chess or cards. One of Poor Richard's maxim's was: "Work as if you were to live a hundred years, pray as if you were to die to-morrow," and, while Franklin was not the person to pray in just that rapt fashion, he seems to have thought rather better of prayer than of other religious ceremonies. In the letter of caution to his daughter Sally, from which we have already quoted, he tells her, "Go constantly to church, whoever preaches. The act of devotion in the Common Prayer Book is your principal business there, and if properly attended to, will do more towards amending the heart than sermons generally can do. For they were composed by men of much greater piety and wisdom, than our common composers of sermons can pretend to be." He promptly repelled an intimation of his sister Jane that he was opposed to divine worship with the statement that, so far from thinking that God was not to be worshipped, he had composed and written a whole book of devotions for his own use; meaning his *Articles of Belief and Acts of Religion.* This statement always brings back to us the reply of Charles Sumner, when he was very sick, and was asked whether he was prepared to die, viz. that he had read the Old Testament in the Greek version. A glance at the "First Principles," with which the book begins, would hardly, we fear, have allayed the fears of Jane. That Franklin should ever, even at the age of twenty-two, have composed anything in the way of a creed so fanciful, not to say fantastic, is nothing short of an enormity, even more startlingly out of harmony with his usually sound and sure-footed intelligence than the whimsical letter to General Charles Lee, in which, on the eve of the American Revolution, he advised a return to bows and arrows as efficient instruments of modern warfare. "I

believe," commences the creed, "there is one supreme, most perfect Being, Author and Father of the Gods themselves. For I believe that Man is not the most perfect Being but one, rather that as there are many Degrees of Beings his Inferiors, so there are many Degrees of Beings superior to him." Then, after quite a lengthy preamble, follows this Confession of Faith:

Therefore I think it seems required of me, and my Duty as a Man, to pay Divine Regards to SOMETHING.

I conceive then, that The INFINITE has created many beings or Gods, vastly superior to Man, who can better conceive his Perfections than we, and return him a more rational and glorious Praise.

As, among Men, the Praise of the Ignorant or of Children, is not regarded by the ingenious Painter or Architect, who is rather honour'd and pleas'd with the approbation of Wise Men & Artists.

It may be that these created Gods are immortal; or it may be that after many Ages, they are changed, and others Supply their Places.

Howbeit, I conceive that each of these is exceeding wise and good, and very powerful; and that Each has made for himself one glorious Sun, attended with a beautiful and admirable System of Planets.

It is that particular Wise and Good God, who is the author and owner of our System, that I propose for the object of my praise and adoration.

Under the same head of "First Principles," there is a slight flavor of the *Art of Virtue:* "Since without Virtue Man can have no Happiness in this World, I firmly believe he delights to see me Virtuous, because he is pleased when he sees Me Happy."

That one of the sanest, wisest, and most terrene of great men, and a man, too, who was not supposed in his time to have any very firm belief in the existence of even one God, should, young as he was, have peopled the stellar

spaces with such a hierarchy, half pantheistic, half feudal as this, is, we take it, one of the most surprising phenomena in the history of the human intellect. James Parton surmises that the idea probably filtered to Franklin, when he was a youth in London, through Dr. Pemberton, the editor of the third edition of the *Principia*, from a conjecture thrown out in conversation by Sir Isaac Newton. It reappears in Franklin's *Arabian Tale*. "Men in general," says Belubel, the Strong, "do not know, but thou knowest, that in ascending from an elephant to the infinitely Great, Good, and Wise, there is also a long gradation of beings, who possess powers and faculties of which thou canst yet have no conception."

The next head in the book of devotions is "Adoration," under which is arranged a series of liturgical statements, accompanied by a recurrent note of praise, and preceded by an invocation and the following prelude in the nature of a stage direction:

> Being mindful that before I address the Deity, my soul ought to be calm and serene, free from Passion and Perturbation, or otherwise elevated with Rational Joy and Pleasure, I ought to use a Countenance that expresses a filial Respect, mixed with a kind of Smiling, that Signifies inward Joy, and Satisfaction, and Admiration.[1]

The liturgical statements are followed by another direction that it will not be improper now to read part of some such book as Ray's *Wisdom of God in the Creation*, or *Blackmore on the Creation*, or the Archbishop of Cambray's *Demonstration of the Being of a God*, etc., or else to spend some minutes in a serious silence contemplating on those

[1] We are informed by Franklin in the *Autobiography* that he inserted on one page of his "little book" a "scheme of employment for the twenty-four hours of a natural day." The opening injunction of this plan of conduct brings the wash-basin and the altar into rather amusing juxtaposition: "Rise, wash, and address *Powerful Goodness!*"

subjects. Then follows another direction calling for Milton's glorious *Hymn to the Creator;* then still another calling for the reading of some book, or part of a book, discoursing on, and inciting to, Moral Virtue; then a succession of resonant supplications, adjuring the aid of the particular Wise and Good God, who is the author and *owner* (or subfeudatory) of our System, in Franklin's efforts to shun certain vices and infirmities, and to practice certain virtues; all of the vices, infirmities and virtues being set forth in the most specific terms with the limpidity which marked everything that Franklin ever wrote, sacred or profane. One of the supplications was that he might be loyal to his Prince and faithful to his country. This he was until it became impossible for him to be loyal to both. Another was that he might avoid lasciviousness. The prayer was not answered; for William Franklin, on account of whose birth he should have received twenty-one lashes under the laws of Pennsylvania, was born about two years after it was framed. Creed and liturgy end with a series of thanks for the benefits which the author had already received. Both creed and liturgy, we are told by James Parton, were recorded with the utmost care and elegance in a little pocket prayer-book, and the liturgy Franklin practiced for many years. For a large part of his life, he bore his book of devotions and his book of moral practice about on his person wherever he went, as if they were amulets to ward off every evil inclination upon his part to yield to what he calls in the *Autobiography* "the unremitting attraction of ancient habits."

It is likewise a fact that, notwithstanding the high opinion that he expressed to his daughter Sally of the Book of Common Prayer, he undertook at one time to assist Sir Francis Dashwood, Lord Le Despencer in reforming it. The delicious incongruity of the thing is very much enhanced when we remember that a part of

Sir Francis' religious training for the task consisted in the circumstance that, in his wilder days, he had been the Abbot of Medmenham Abbey, which numbered among its godless monks—named the Franciscans after himself—the Earl of Sandwich, Paul Whitehead, Budd Doddington and John Wilkes. Over the portals of this infamous retreat was written "Do what you please," and within it the licentious invitation was duly carried into practice by perhaps the most graceless group of blasphemers and libertines that England had ever known. However, when Sir Francis and Franklin became collaborators, the former had, with advancing years, apparently reached the conclusion that this world was one where a decent regard should be paid to something higher than ourselves in preference to giving ourselves up unreservedly to doing what we please, and intercourse, bred by the fact that Sir Francis was a Joint Postmaster-General of Great Britain at the same time that Franklin was Deputy Postmaster-General for America, led naturally to a co-operative venture on their part. Of Sir Francis, when the dregs of his life were settling down into the bottom of the glass, leaving nothing but the better elements of his existence to be drawn off, Franklin gives us a genial picture. Speaking of West Wycombe, Sir Francis' country seat, he says: "But a pleasanter Thing is the kind Countenance, the facetious and very intelligent Conversation of mine Host, who having been for many Years engaged in publick Affairs, seen all Parts of Europe, and kept the best Company in the World, is himself the best existing." High praise this, indeed, from a man who usually had a social equivalent for whatever he received from an agreeable host! Franklin took as his share of the revision the Catechism and the Psalms. Of the Catechism, he retained only two questions (with the answers), "What is your duty to God?" and "What is your duty to your neighbor?" The Psalms he very much

shortened by omitting the repetitions (of which he found, he said, in a letter to Granville Sharp, more than he could have imagined) and the imprecations, which appeared, he said, in the same letter, not to suit well the Christian doctrine of forgiveness of injuries and doing good to enemies. As revised by the two friends, the book was shorn of all references to the Sacraments and to the divinity of Our Lord, and the commandments in the Catechism, the Nicene and the Athanasian Creeds, and even the Canticle, "All ye Works of the Lord," so close to the heart of nature, were ruthlessly deleted. All of the Apostle's Creed, too, went, except, to use Franklin's words, "the parts that are most intelligible and most essential." The *Te Deum* and the *Venite* were also pared down to very small proportions. Some of the other changes assumed the form of abridgments of the services provided for Communion, Infant Baptism, Confirmation, the Visitation of the Sick and the Burial of the Dead. Franklin loved his species too much, we may be sure, not to approve unqualifiedly the resolution of Sir Francis to omit wholly "the Commination, and all cursing of mankind." Nor was a man, whose own happy marriage had begun with such little ceremony, likely to object strongly to the abbreviation of the service for the solemnization of Matrimony upon which Sir Francis also decided. In fine, the whole of the Book of Common Prayer was reduced to nearly one half its original compass. The preface was written by Franklin. Judging from its terms, the principal motive of the new version was to do away with the physical inconvenience and discomfort caused in one way or another by long services. If the services were abridged, the clergy would be saved a great deal of fatigue, many pious and devout persons, unable from age or infirmities to remain for hours in a cold church, would then attend divine worship and be comfortable, the younger people would probably attend oftener and more cheer-

fully, the sick would not find the prayer for the visitation of the sick such a burden in their weak and distressed state, and persons, standing around an open grave, could put their hats on again after a much briefer period of exposure. Other reasons are given for the revision, but the idea of holding out brevity as a kind of bait to worship is the dominant one that runs through the Preface. It is written exactly as if there was no such thing in the world as hallowed religious traditions, associations or sentiments, deep as Human Love, strong as Death, to which an almost sacrilegious shock would be given by even moderate innovations. "The book," Franklin says in his letter to Granville Sharp, "was printed for Wilkie, in St. Paul's Church Yard, but never much noticed. Some were given away, very few sold, and I suppose the bulk became waste paper. In the prayers so much was retrenched that approbation could hardly be expected." In America, the Abridgment was known as "Franklin's Prayer Book," and, worthless as it is, in a religious sense, since it became rare, Franklin's fame has been known to give a single copy of it a pecuniary value of not less than one thousand dollars. The literary relations of Franklin to devotion began with a Creed as eccentric as the Oriental notion that the whole world is upheld by a cow with blue horns and ended with partial responsibility for a Prayer Book almost as devoid of a true religious spirit as one of his dissertations on chimneys. He was slow, however, to renounce a practical aim, when once formed. The abridged Prayer Book was printed in 1773, and some fourteen years afterwards in a letter to Alexander Small he expressed his pleasure at hearing that it had met with the approbation of Small and "good Mrs. Baldwin." "It is not yet, that I know of," he said, "received in public Practice anywhere; but, as it is said that Good Motions never die, perhaps in time it may be found useful."

Another incident in the relations of Franklin to Prayer was the suggestion made by him in the Federal Convention of 1787 that thenceforth prayers, imploring the assistance of Heaven and its blessing on the deliberations of the Convention, should be held every morning before the Convention proceeded to business. "In this Situation of this Assembly, groping, as it were, in the dark to find Political Truth, and scarce able to distinguish it when presented to us, how has it happened, Sir," he asked, "that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of Lights to illuminate our Understandings?" The question was a timely one, and was part of an eloquent and impressive speech, but resulted in nothing more fruitful than an exclamatory memorandum of Franklin, indignant or humorous we do not know which, "The convention, except three or four persons, thought prayers unnecessary!"

It is only when insisting upon the charitable and fruitful side of religion that Franklin has any wholesome or winning message to deliver touching it; but, when doing this, his utterances are often edifying in the highest degree. In an early letter to his father, who believed that the son had imbibed some erroneous opinions with regard to religion, after respectfully reminding his father that it is no more in a man's power to think than to look like another, he used these words:

> My mother grieves that one of her sons is an Arian, another an Arminian. What an Arminian or an Arian is, I cannot say that I very well know. The truth is, I make such distinctions very little my study. I think vital religion has always suffered, when orthodoxy is more regarded than virtue; and the Scriptures assure me, that at the last day we shall not be examined what we *thought*, but what we *did;* and our recommendation will not be, that we said, *Lord! Lord!* but that we did good to our fellow creatures. (See Matt. xxv.)

These convictions he was destined to reaffirm over and over again in the course of his life. They were most elaborately stated in his forty-eighth year in a letter to Joseph Huey. He had received, he said, much kindness from men, to whom he would never have any opportunity of making the least direct return, and numberless mercies from God who was infinitely above being benefited by our services. Those kindnesses from men he could therefore only return on their fellow men, and he could only show his gratitude for these mercies from God by a readiness to help God's other children and his brethren. For he did not think that thanks and compliments, though repeated weekly, could discharge our real obligations to each other and much less those to our Creator. He that for giving a draught of water to a thirsty person should expect to be paid with a good plantation, would be modest in his demands compared with those who think they deserve Heaven for the little good they do on earth. The faith Huey mentioned, he said, had doubtless its use in the world; but he wished it were more productive of good works than he had generally seen it; he meant real good works, works of kindness, charity, mercy and public spirit; not holiday keeping, sermon reading or hearing, performing church ceremonies, or making long prayers, filled with flatteries and compliments, despised even by wise men and much less capable of pleasing the Deity. The worship of God was a duty; the hearing reading of sermons might be useful, but if men rested in hearing and praying, as too many did, it was as if a tree should value itself on being watered and putting forth leaves though it never produced any fruit.

Your great Master [he continued] tho't much less of these outward Appearances and Professions than many of his modern Disciples. He prefer'd the *Doers* of the Word, to the meer *Hearers;* the Son that seemingly refus'd to obey his

Father, and yet perform'd his Commands, to him that profess'd his Readiness, but neglected the Work, the heretical but charitable Samaritan, to the uncharitable tho' orthodox Priest and sanctified Levite; & those who gave Food to the hungry, Drink to the Thirsty, Raiment to the Naked, Entertainment to the Stranger, and Relief to the Sick, tho' they never heard of his Name, he declares shall in the last Day be accepted, when those who cry Lord! Lord! who value themselves on their Faith, tho' great enough to perform Miracles, but have neglected good Works, shall be rejected.

And then, after a word about the modesty of Christ, he breaks out into something as much like a puff of anger as anything that his perfect mental balance would allow; "But now-a-days we have scarce a little Parson, that does not think it the Duty of every Man within his Reach to sit under his petty Ministrations." Altogether, the Rev. Mr. Hemphill never stole, and few clergymen ever composed, a more striking sermon on good works than this letter. And this was because the doctrines that it preached belonged fully as much to the province of Human Benevolence as of Religion.

A pretty sermon also was the letter of Franklin to his sister Jane on Faith, Hope and Charity. After quoting a homely acrostic, in which his uncle Benjamin, who, humble as his place on Parnassus was, fumbled poetry with distinctly better success than the nephew, had advised Jane to "raise *faith* and *hope* three stories higher," he went on to read her a lecture which is too closely knit to admit of compression:

You are to understand, then, that *faith*, *hope*, and *charity* have been called the three steps of Jacob's ladder, reaching from earth to heaven; our author calls them *stories*, likening religion to a building, and these are the three stories of the Christian edifice. Thus improvement in religion is called *building up* and *edification*. *Faith* is then the ground floor,

hope is up one pair of stairs. My dear beloved Jenny, don't delight so much to dwell in those lower rooms, but get as fast as you can into the garret, for in truth the best room in the house is *charity*. For my part, I wish the house was turned upside down; 'tis so difficult (when one is fat) to go up stairs; and not only so, but I imagine *hope* and *faith* may be more firmly built upon *charity*, than *charity* upon *faith* and *hope*. However that may be, I think it the better reading to say—

"Raise faith and hope one story higher."

Correct it boldly, and I'll support the alteration; for, when you are up two stories already, if you raise your building three stories higher you will make five in all, which is two more than there should be, you expose your upper rooms more to the winds and storms; and, besides, I am afraid the foundation will hardly bear them, unless indeed you build with such light stuff as straw and stubble, and that, you know, won't stand fire. Again, where the author says,

"Kindness of heart by words express,"

strike out *words* and put in *deeds*. The world is too full of compliments already. They are the rank growth of every soil, and choak the good plants of benevolence, and beneficence; nor do I pretend to be the first in this comparison of words and actions to plants; you may remember an ancient poet, whose works we have all studied and copied at school long ago.

"A man of words and not of deeds
Is like a garden full of weeds."

'Tis a pity that good works, among some sorts of people, are so little valued, and good words admired in their stead: I mean seemingly pious discourses, instead of humane benevolent actions.

To the Rev. Thomas Coombe Franklin expressed the opinion that, unless pulpit eloquence turned men to righteousness, the preacher or the priest was not merely

sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal, which were innocent things, but rather like the cunning man in the Old Baily who conjured and told fools their fortunes to cheat them out of their money.

The general spirit of these various utterances of Franklin on vital religion were sarcastically condensed in a remark of Poor Richard: "Serving God is doing good to Man, but praying is thought an easier serving, and therefore most generally chosen."

In forming an accurate conception of the influences by which the mind of Franklin was brought into its posture of antagonism or indifference to the doctrinal side of religion, it is necessary to take into consideration not only the innate attributes of his intellect and character but also the external pressure to which his opinions were subjected in his early life. It was the religious intolerance and proscriptive spirit of the Puritan society, in which he was born and reared, which drove him, first, into dissent, and then, into disbelief. Borne the day he was born, if tradition may be believed, though the ground was covered with snow, to the Old South Church in Boston, and baptized there, so that he might escape every chance of dying an unregenerate and doomed infant, he grew into boyhood to find himself surrounded by conditions which tended either to reduce the free impulses of his nature to supine or sullen submission or to force him into active revolt. It is hard to suppress a smile when he tells us in the *Autobiography* that his father, who doubtless knew the difference between an Arian and an Arminian even better than his mother, intended to devote him as the tithe of his sons to the service of the Church. He smiles himself when he adds with a trace of his former commercial calling that his uncle Benjamin approved of the idea and proposed to give him all his short-hand volumes of sermons "as a stock" Franklin supposed, "to set up with." The intention of Josiah was soon aban-

doned, and Benjamin became the apprentice of his brother James, the owner and publisher of the Boston *Courant*, the fourth newspaper published in America. During the course of this apprenticeship, first, as a contributor to the *Courant*, under the *nom de plume* of Silence Dogood, and, then, as its publisher in the place of his brother, who had incurred the censure of the Puritan Lord Brethren, he was drawn into the bitter attack made by it upon the religious intolerance and narrowness of the times. During its career, the paper plied the ruling dignitaries of the Boston of that day with so many clever little pasquinades that the Rev. Increase Mather was compelled to signify to the printer that he would have no more of their wicked Courants.

I that have known what New England was from the Beginning [he said] can not but be troubled to see the Degeneracy of this Place. I can well remember when the Civil Government would have taken an effectual Course to suppress such a *Cursed Libel!* which if it be not done I am afraid that some *Awful Judgment* will come upon this Land, and the *Wrath of God will arise, and there will be no Remedy.*

Undaunted, the wicked *Courant* took pains to let the public know that, while the angry minister was no longer one of its subscribers, he sent his grandson for the paper every week, and by paying a higher price for it in that way was a more valuable patron than ever. The indignation of another writer, supposed to be Cotton Mather, lashed itself into such fury that it seemed as if the vile sheet would be buried beneath a pyramid of vituperative words. "The *Courant*," he declared, was "a notorious, scandalous" newspaper, "full freighted with nonsense, unmannerliness, railery, prophaneness, immorality, arrogance, calumnies, lies, contradictions, and what not, all tending to quarrels and divisions, and to debauch and corrupt the minds and manners of New England." For

a time, the Church was too much for the scoffers. James Franklin was not haled for his sins before the Judgment seat of God, as Increase Mather said he might be, speedily, though a young man, but he was, as we shall hereafter see more in detail, reduced to such a plight by the hand of civil authority that he had to turn over the management of the *Courant* to Benjamin, whose tart wit and literary skill made it more of a cursed libel than ever to arbitrary power and clerical bigotry.

The daring state of license, into which the sprightly boy fell, during his connection with the *Courant*, is clearly revealed in the letter contributed by Silence Dogood to it on the subject of Harvard College. In this letter, she tells how the greater part of the rout that left Harvard College "went along a large beaten Path, which led to a Temple at the further End of the Plain, call'd, *The Temple of Theology*." "The Business of those who were employed in this Temple being laborious and painful, I wonder'd exceedingly," she said, "to see so many go towards it; but while I was pondering this Matter in my Mind, I spy'd *Pecunia* behind a Curtain, beckoning to them with her Hand, which Sight immediately satisfy'd me for whose Sake it was, that a great Part of them (I will not say all) travel'd that Road." While the *Courant* was running its lively course, young Franklin was shunning church on Sundays, reading Shaftesbury and Anthony Collins, and drifting further and further away from all the fixed shore-lights of religious faith.

Then came the hegira, which ended, as all the world knows, at Philadelphia. The first place curiously enough, in which the fugitive slept after reaching that city, was the great Quaker Meeting House, whither he had been swept by the concourse of clean-dressed people, that he had seen walking towards it, when he was sauntering aimlessly about the streets of his new home, shortly after his arrival. "I sat down among them," he says in the

Autobiography, "and, after looking round awhile and hearing nothing said, being very drowsy thro' labour and want of rest the preceding night, I fell fast asleep, and continu'd so till the meeting broke up, when one was kind enough to rouse me." The halcyon calm of this meeting offers a strange enough contrast to the "disputatious turn" which had been engendered in him as he tells us by his father's "books of dispute about religion" before he left Boston.

The state of mind with respect to religion that he brought with him to Philadelphia is thus described by him in the *Autobiography:*

> My parents had early given me religious impressions, and brought me through my childhood piously in the Dissenting way. But I was scarce fifteen, when, after doubting by turns of several points, as I found them disputed in the different books I read, I began to doubt of Revelation itself. Some books against Deism fell into my hands; they were said to be the substance of sermons preached at Boyle's lectures. It happened that they wrought an effect on me quite contrary to what was intended by them; for the arguments of the Deists, which were quoted to be refuted, appeared to me much stronger than the refutations.

Before the inevitable reaction set in, we obtain from the *Autobiography* a few other items of religious or semi-religious interest. A passing reference has already been made to Keimer's invitation to Franklin to unite with him in founding another sect. He had been so often trepanned by Franklin's Socratic method of argument that he had finally come to entertain a great respect for it. He was to preach the doctrines, and his co-laborer was to confound all opponents. As he was in the habit of wearing his beard at full length, because somewhere in the Mosaic Law it was said, "Thou shalt not mar the corners of thy beard"; and was also in the habit of keep-

ing the seventh day as his Sabbath, he insisted that these two habits of his should be enjoined as essential points of discipline upon the adherents of the new creed. Franklin agreed to acquiesce in this upon the condition that Keimer would confine himself to a vegetable diet. The latter consented, and, though a great glutton, ate no animal food for three months. During this period, their victuals were dressed and brought to them by a woman in their neighborhood who had been given by Franklin a list of forty dishes, to be prepared for them at different times, in all which there was neither fish, flesh nor fowl. "The whim," he declared, "suited me the better at this time from the cheapness of it, not costing us above eighteen pence sterling each per week." At the termination of three months, however, Keimer could live up to his Pythagorean vow no longer, invited two of his women friends and Franklin to dine with him, and ordered a roast pig for the occasion. Unfortunately for his guests, the pig was placed a little prematurely upon the table, and was all consumed by him before they arrived. With the disappearance of the pig, the new sect came to an end too.

As sharp as the contrast between Franklin's spirit and the dove-like peace that brooded over the Great Quaker Meeting House, was the contrast between it and that of the self-devoted nun, whom he was once permitted to visit in the garret, in which she had immured herself, of his lodging house in Duke Street, London, opposite the Romish Chapel. As there was no nunnery in England, she had resolved to lead the life of a nun as nearly as possible under the circumstances. Accordingly she had donated all her estate to charitable uses, reserving only twelve pounds a year to live on, and out of this sum she still gave a great deal to charity, subsisting herself on water gruel only, and using no fire but to boil it. For many years, she had been allowed to live in her garret

free of charge by successive Catholic tenants of the house, as they deemed it a blessing to have her there. A priest visited her to confess her every day. When asked how she could possibly find so much employment for a confessor, she replied: "Oh! It is impossible to avoid *vain thoughts*." Franklin found her cheerful and polite and of pleasant conversation. Her room was clean, but had no other furniture than a mattress, a table with a crucifix and book, a stool, which she gave him to sit on, and a picture over the chimney of Saint Veronica, displaying her handkerchief, with the miraculous figure of Christ's bleeding face on it, which she explained to Franklin, of all the persons in the world, with great seriousness. She looked pale, but was never sick. "I give it," says Franklin in the *Autobiography*, "as another instance on how small an income, life and health may be supported." At no period of his existence, was he less likely to be in sympathy with the ascetic side of religion than at this. Indeed, while in London at this time, believing that some of the reasonings of Wollaston's *Religion of Nature*, which he was engaged in composing at Palmer's Printing House in Bartholomew Close, where he was employed as a printer, were not well founded, he wrote *A Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity, Pleasure and Pain*, and dedicated it to his rapscallion friend, James Ralph, whose own ideas about Liberty may be inferred from the fact that he had deserted his family in Philadelphia to seek his fortune in England. This pamphlet Franklin afterwards came to regard as one of the *errata* of his life, and, of the one hundred copies of it that were printed, he then burnt all that he could lay his hands on except one with marginal notes by Lyons, the author of *The Infallibility of Human Judgment*. The argument of the pamphlet, as Franklin states it in the *Autobiography*, was that, as both virtue and vice owed their origin to an infinitely wise, good and powerful God, "nothing could possibly be wrong in the

world," and vice and virtue were empty distinctions. Franklin's efforts to suppress the piece were, naturally enough, ineffectual, for there was an inextinguishable spark of vitality in almost everything that he ever wrote.

These utterances make it apparent enough that the religious character of Franklin was subject to too many serious limitations to justify even early American patriotism in holding him up as an exemplar of religious orthodoxy, although our incredulity is not necessarily overtaxed by the statement of Parson Weems that, when Franklin was on his deathbed, he had a picture of Christ on the Cross placed in such a situation that he could conveniently rest his eyes upon it, and declared: "That's the picture of Him who came into the world to teach men to love one another." This kind of a teacher, divine or human, could not fail to awaken in him something as nearly akin to religious reverence as his nature was capable of entertaining. But his mental and moral constitution was one to which it was impossible that the supernatural or miraculous element in Religion could address a persuasive appeal. "In the Affairs of this World, Men are saved, not by Faith, but by Want of it," said Poor Richard, and it was with the affairs of this World that Franklin was exclusively concerned. When he visited the recluse in her Duke Street garret, it was not the crucifix and book, nor the picture over the chimney of Saint Veronica and her handkerchief that arrested his attention, nor was it the self-sacrificing fidelity of the lonely figure under harsh restrictions to a pure and unselfish purpose. It was rather the small income, with its salutary lesson of frugality for the struggling world outside, on which she contrived to support life and health. If he deemed a set of sectarian principles to be whimsical, as he did some of those professed by the Quakers, he humored them in the spirit of his wife who, he reminded his daughter in one of his letters, was in the habit of

saying: "*If People can be pleased with small Matters, it is a Pity but they should have them.*" Few men have ever been more familiar with the Scriptures than he. Some of his happiest illustrations were derived from its pictured narratives and rich imagery, but the idea that God had revealed His purposes to His children in its pages was one not congenial with his sober and inquisitive mental outlook; and equally uncongenial was the idea, which of all others has exercised the profoundest degree of religious influence upon the human heart, that Christ, the only begotten son of our Lord, was sent into the world to redeem us from our sins with His most precious blood. Even his belief in the existence of a superintending Providence and a system of rewards and punishments here or hereafter for our moral conduct was a more or less vague, floating belief, such as few thoroughly wise, well-balanced and fair-minded men, who have given any real thought to the universe, in which they lived, have ever failed to form to a greater or less degree. In a word, of that real, vital religion, which vivifies even the common, dull details of our daily lives, and irradiates with cheerful hope even the dark abyss, to which our feet are hourly tending, which purifies our hearts, refines our natures, quickens our sympathies, exalts our ideals, and is capable unassisted of inspiring even the humblest life with a subdued but noble enthusiasm, equal to all the shocks of existence—of this religion Franklin had none, or next to none. He went about the alteration of the Book of Common Prayer exactly as if he were framing a constitution for the Albany Congress or for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. That the alterations were to be shaped by any but purely practical considerations, that deep religious feeling has unreasoning reservations which intuitively resent the mere suggestion of change, he does not seem to have realized at all. Religion to him was like any other apparatus, essential to the well-being of or-

ganized society, a thing to be fashioned and adapted to its uses without reference to anything but the ordinary principles of utility. "If men are so wicked as we now see them *with religion*, what would they be *if without it?*" was a question addressed by him in his old age to a correspondent whom he was advising to burn a skeptical manuscript written by the former.

At the age of twenty, Franklin came back from London to Philadelphia, and it was then that the reaction in his infidel tendencies took place. From extreme dissent he was brought by a process of reasoning, as purely inductive as any that he ever pursued as a philosopher, to believe that he had wandered off into the paths of error, and should make his way back to the narrow but safer road. Under his perverting influence, his friend Collins had become a free-thinker, and Collins had soon acquired a habit of sotting with brandy, and had never repaid to him the portion of Mr. Vernon's money which he had borrowed from him. Under the same influence, his friend, Ralph had become a free-thinker, and Ralph had been equally faithless in the discharge of his pecuniary obligations to him. Sir William Keith, the Colonial Governor of Pennsylvania, whose fair promises, as we shall see, had led him on a fool's errand to London, was a free-thinker, and Sir William had proved an unprincipled cozener. Benjamin Franklin himself was a free-thinker, and Benjamin Franklin had forgotten the faith that he plighted to Deborah Read, and had converted Mr. Vernon's money to his own use. The final result, Franklin tells us, was that his pamphlet on *Liberty and Necessity* appeared now not so clever a performance as he once thought it, and he doubted whether some error had not insinuated itself unperceived into his argument, so as to infect all that followed, as was common with metaphysical reasonings. From this point, the drift to the *Articles of Belief and Acts of Religion*, the little book of moral

practice, the *Art of Virtue*, the Rev. Mr. Hemphill and Christ Church was natural enough.

We might add that the views upon which Franklin's mind finally settled down after its recoil from his pamphlet on *Liberty and Necessity* persisted until his last day. In a letter to Ezra Stiles, written but a little over a month before his death, he made the following statement of his faith:

You desire to know something of my Religion. It is the first time I have been questioned upon it. But I cannot take your Curiosity amiss, and shall endeavour in a few Words to gratify it. Here is my Creed. I believe in one God, Creator of the Universe. That he governs it by his Providence. That he ought to be worshipped. That the most acceptable Service we render to him is doing good to his other Children. That the soul of Man is immortal, and will be treated with Justice in another Life respecting its Conduct in this. These I take to be the fundamental Principles of all sound Religion, and I regard them as you do in whatever Sect I meet with them.

As to Jesus of Nazareth, my Opinion of whom you particularly desire, I think the System of Morals and his Religion, as he left them to us, the best the World ever saw or is likely to see; but I apprehend it has received various corrupting Changes, and I have, with most of the present Dissenters in England, some Doubts as to his Divinity; tho' it is a question I do not dogmatize upon, having never studied it, and think it needless to busy myself with it now, when I expect soon an Opportunity of knowing the Truth with less Trouble. I see no harm, however, in its being believed, if that Belief has the good Consequence, as probably it has, of making his Doctrines more respected and better observed; especially as I do not perceive, that the Supreme takes it amiss, by distinguishing the Unbelievers in his Government of the World with any peculiar Marks of his Displeasure.

I shall only add, respecting myself, that, having experienced the Goodness of that Being in conducting me prosperously

401

thro' a long life, I have no doubt of its Continuance in the next, though without the smallest conceit of meriting such Goodness.

It is amusing to compare this letter written in America to the President of Yale College with what Franklin had previously written to Madame Brillon, when she objected to the marriage of her daughter to William Temple Franklin partly on the score of religious incompatibility: "These are my ideas. In each Religion, there are certain essential things, and there are others that are only Forms and Modes; just as a loaf of Sugar may happen to be wrapped up in either brown, or white or blue Paper, tied up with either red or yellow hempen or worsted twine. In every instance the essential thing is the sugar itself. Now the essentials of a good Religion consist, it seems to me, in these 5 Articles viz." Then ensues a statement of practically the same fundamental tenets as those that he afterwards laid before Ezra Stiles; except that, when he wrote to Madame Brillon, he was not certain whether we should be rewarded or punished according to our deserts in this life or in the life to come. He then adds: "These Essentials are found in both your Religion and ours, the differences are only Paper and Twine."

Dr. Priestley, in his *Autobiography*, laments that a man of Dr. Franklin's general good character and great influence should have been an unbeliever in Christianity, and should also have done as much as he did to make others unbelievers. Franklin acknowledged to this friend that he had not given as much attention as he ought to have done to the evidences of Christianity, and, at his request, Priestley recommended to him several books on the subject, which he does not seem to have read. As Priestley himself rejected the doctrines of the Trinity, the Atonement, Original Sin and Miraculous Inspiration, and considered Christ to be "a mere man,"

though divinely commissioned and assisted, his fitness for the office of winning Franklin over to Christianity might well have been questioned. He belonged to the same category as Dr. Richard Price, that other warm friend of Franklin, who came into Franklin's mind when Sir John Pringle asked him whether he knew where he could go to hear a preacher of *rational* Christianity.

Franklin, it passes without saying, had his laugh at Religion as he had at everything else at times. "Some have observed," he says of the clergy in his *Apology for Printers*, "that 'tis a fruitful Topic, and the easiest to be witty upon of all others." For the earliest outbreak of his humor on the subject, we are indebted to William Temple Franklin. Young Benjamin found the long graces uttered by his father before and after meals rather tedious. "I think, father," said he one day after the provisions for the winter had been salted, "if you were to say grace over the whole cask, once for all, it would be a vast saving of time." Some of his later jests, at the expense of Religion, read as if they were conceived at the period, upon which his vow of silence called a halt, when, according to the *Autobiography*, he was getting into the habit of prattling, punning and joking, which only made him acceptable to trifling company. Others, however, have the earmarks of his humorous spirit in its more noteworthy manifestations. When he was off on his military excursion against the Indians, his command had for its chaplain a zealous Presbyterian minister, Mr. Beatty, who complained to him that the men did not generally attend his prayers and exhortations. When they enlisted, they were promised, besides pay and provisions, a gill of rum a day, which was punctually served out to them, half in the morning, and the other half in the evening.

> I observ'd [says Franklin in the *Autobiography*] they were as punctual in attending to receive it; upon which I said to

Mr. Beatty, "It is, perhaps, below the dignity of your profession to act as steward of the rum, but if you were to deal it out and only just after prayers, you would have them all about you." He liked the tho't, undertook the office, and, with the help of a few hands to measure out the liquor, executed it to satisfaction, and never were prayers more generally and more punctually attended; so that I thought this method preferable to the punishment inflicted by some military laws for non-attendance on divine service.

The efficacy itself of prayer also elicited some bantering comments from him. Alluding to the prayers offered up in New England for the reduction of Louisburg, he wrote to John Franklin:

Some seem to think forts are as easy taken as snuff. Father Moody's prayers look tolerably modest. You have a fast and prayer day for that purpose; in which I compute five hundred thousand petitions were offered up to the same effect in New England, which added to the petitions of every family morning and evening, multiplied by the number of days since January 25th, make forty-five millions of prayers; which, set against the prayers of a few priests in the garrison, to the Virgin Mary, give a vast balance in your favour.

If you do not succeed, I fear I shall have but an indifferent opinion of Presbyterian prayers in such cases, as long as I live. Indeed, in attacking strong towns I should have more dependence on *works*, than on *faith;* for, like the kingdom of heaven, they are to be taken by force and violence; and in a French garrison I suppose there are devils of that kind, that they are not to be cast out by prayers and fasting, unless it be by their own fasting for want of provisions.

We can readily imagine that more than one mirth-provoking letter like this from the pen of Franklin passed into the general circulation of Colonial humor.

As for the humorist, he did not fail to return to the subject a little later on, when Louisburg, after being

bandied about between English and French control, was again in the hands of the English. "I congratulate you," he said to Jane Mecom, "on the conquest of Cape Breton, and hope as your people took it by praying, the first time, you will now pray that it may never be given up again, which you then forgot."

In his *A Letter from China*, he makes the sailor, who is supposed to be narrating his experiences in China, say that he asked his Chinese master why they did not go to church to pray, as was done in Europe, and was answered that they paid the priests to pray for them that they might stay at home, and mind their business, and that it would be a folly to pay others for praying, and then go and do the praying themselves, and that the more work they did, while the priests prayed, the better able they were to pay them well for praying.

After expressing his regret in a letter from New York to Colonel Henry Bouquet, the hero of the battle of Bushy Run, that because of business he could enjoy so little of the conversation of that gallant officer at Philadelphia, he exclaimed: "How happy are the Folks in Heaven, who, tis said, have nothing to do, but to talk with one another, except now and then a little Singing & Drinking of Aqua Vitæ."

His leniency in relation to the Sabbath also vented itself in a jocose letter to Jared Ingersoll:

> I should be glad to know what it is that distinguishes Connecticut religion from common religion. Communicate, if you please, some of these particulars that you think will amuse me as a virtuoso. When I travelled in Flanders, I thought of our excessively strict observation of Sunday; and that a man could hardly travel on that day among you upon his lawful occasions without hazard of punishment; while, where I was, every one travelled, if he pleased, or diverted himself in any other way; and in the afternoon both high and low went to the play or the opera, where there was plenty of singing,

fiddling and dancing. I looked around for God's judgments, but saw no signs of them. The cities were well built and full of inhabitants, the markets filled with plenty, the people well-favoured and well clothed, the fields well tilled, the cattle fat and strong, the fences, houses, and windows all in repair, and no Old Tenor (paper money) anywhere in the country; which would almost make one suspect that the Deity is not so angry at that offence as a New England Justice.

The joke sometimes turns up when we are least expecting it, if it can be said that there is ever a time when a flash of wit or humor from Franklin surprises us. In a letter to Richard Price, asking him for a list of good books, such as were most proper to inculcate principles of sound religion and just government, he informs Price that, a new town in Massachusetts having done him the honor to name itself after him, and proposing to build a steeple to their meeting-house, if he would give them a bell, he had advised the sparing themselves the expense of a steeple for the present and that they would accept of books instead of a bell; "sense being preferable to sound." There is a gleam of the same sort in his revised version of the Lord's Prayer; for, almost incredible as the fact is, his irreverent hand tinkered even with this most sacred of human petitions. "Our Liturgy," he said, "uses neither the *Debtors* of Matthew, nor the *indebted* of Luke, but instead of them speaks of *those that trespass against us.* Perhaps the Considering it as a Christian Duty to forgive Debtors, was by the Compilers thought an inconvenient Idea in a trading Nation." Sometimes his humor is so delicate and subtle that even acute intellects, without a keen sense of the ludicrous, mistake it all for labored gravity. This is true of his modernized version of part of the first chapter of Job, where, for illustration, for the words, "But put forth thine hand now, and touch

all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face," he suggests the following: "Try him;—only withdraw your favor, turn him out of his places, and withhold his pensions, and you will soon find him in the opposition." It is a remarkable fact that more than one celebrated man of letters has accepted this exquisite parody as a serious intrusion by Franklin into a reformatory field for which he was unfitted. We dare say that, if Franklin could have anticipated such a result, he would have experienced a degree of pleasure in excess of even that which he was in the habit of feeling when he had successfully passed off his Parable against Persecution on some one as an extract from the Bible.

There is undeniably a lack of reality, a certain sort of hollowness about his religious views. When we tap them, a sound, as of an empty cask, comes back to us. They are distinguished by very much the same want of spontaneous, instinctive feeling, the same artificial cast, the same falsetto note as his system of moral practice and his *Art of Virtue*. Indeed, to a very great degree they are but features of his system of morals. That he ever gave any sincere credence to the written creed of his youth, with its graded Pantheon of Gods, is, of course, inconceivable. This was a mere academic and transitional conceit, inspired by the first youthful impulses of his recession from extreme irreligion to lukewarm acquiescence in accepted religious conventions. Nor can we say that his belief in a single Deity was much more genuine or vital, confidently as he professed to commit himself to the wisdom and goodness of this Deity. There is nothing in his writings, full of well-rounded thanksgiving and praise as they sometimes are, to justify the conclusion that to him God was anything more than the personification, more or less abstract, of those cosmic forces, with which he was so conversant, and of those altruistic promptings of the human heart, of which he himself was such a

beneficent example. The Fatherhood of God was a passive conception to which his mind was conducted almost solely by his active, ever-present sense of the Brotherhood of Man.

But it is no greater misconception to think of Franklin as a Christian than to think of him as a scoffer. He was no scoffer. A laugh or a smile for some ceremonious or extravagant feature of religion he had at times, as we have seen, but no laugh or smile except such as can be reconciled with a substantial measure of genuine religious good-faith. It was never any part of his purpose to decry Religion, to undermine its influence, or to weaken its props. He was too full of the scientific spirit of speculation and distrust, he was too practical and worldly-wise readily to surrender the right of private judgment, or to give himself over to any form of truly devotional fervor, but he had entirely too keen an appreciation of the practical value of religion in restraining human vices and passions and promoting human benevolence to have any disposition to destroy or impair its sway. The motive of his existence was not to unsettle men, nor to cast them adrift, nor to hold out to them novel projects of self-improvement, not rooted in fixed human prepossessions and experience, but to discipline them, to free them from social selfishness, to keep them in subjection to all the salutary restraints, which the past had shown to be good for them. Of these restraints, he knew that those imposed by Religion were among the most potent, and to Religion, therefore, he adhered, if for no other reason, because it was the most helpful ally of human morality, and of the municipal ordinances by which human morality is enforced. From what he said to Lord Kames, it seems that he regarded his *Art of Virtue* as a supplement to Religion, though really with more truth it might be asserted that it was Religion which was the supplement to his *Art of Virtue*.

Christians [he said] are directed to have faith in Christ, as the effectual means of obtaining the change they desire. It may, when sufficiently strong, be effectual with many: for a full opinion, that a Teacher is infinitely wise, good, and powerful, and that he will certainly reward and punish the obedient and disobedient, must give great weight to his precepts, and make them much more attended to by his disciples. But many have this faith in so weak a degree, that it does not produce the effect. Our *Art of Virtue* may, therefore, be of great service to those whose faith is unhappily not so strong, and may come in aid of its weakness.

How little Franklin was inclined to undervalue Religion as a support of good conduct is, among other things, shown by the concern which he occasionally expressed in his letters, when he was abroad, that his wife and daughter should not be slack in attending divine worship. One of his letters to Sally of this nature we have already quoted. Another to his wife expresses the hope that Sally "continues to love going to Church," and states that he would have her read over and over again the Whole Duty of Man and the Lady's Library. In another letter to his wife, he says: "You spent your Sunday very well, but I think you should go oftner to Church." Fortified as he was by his *Art of Virtue*, he felt that church attendance was but a matter of secondary importance for him, but he was eager that his wife and daughter, who had not acquired the habitude of the virtues as he had, should not neglect the old immemorial aids to rectitude.

Even to the levity, with which religious topics might be handled, he set distinct limits. He had no objection to a good-humored joke at the expense of their superficial aspects even if it was a little broad, but with malignant or derisive attacks upon religion he had no sympathy whatever. In the *Autobiography*, he denounces with manifest sincerity, as a wicked travesty, the doggerel version of the Bible, composed by Dr. Brown, who kept

the inn, eight or ten miles from Burlington, at which he lodged overnight, on his first journey from Boston to Philadelphia. Nothing that he ever wrote is wiser or sounder than the letter which he addressed to a friend, dissuading him from publishing a "piece," impugning the Doctrine of a Special Providence. In its utilitarian conceptions of religion and virtue, in the emphasis placed by it upon habit as the best security for righteous conduct, in the cautious respect that it manifests for the general sentiments of mankind on religious subjects, we have a concise revelation of his whole attitude towards Religion, when he was turning his face seriously towards it.

By the Argument it contains against the Doctrines of a particular Providence [he said], tho' you allow a general Providence, you strike at the Foundation of all Religion. For without the Belief of a Providence, that takes Cognizance of, guards, and guides, and may favour particular Persons, there is no Motive to Worship a Deity, to fear its Displeasure, or to pray for its Protection. I will not enter into any Discussion of your Principles, tho' you seem to desire it. At present I shall only give you my Opinion, that, though your Reasonings are subtile, and may prevail with some Readers, you will not succeed so as to change the general Sentiments of Mankind on that Subject, and the Consequence of printing this Piece will be, a great deal of Odium drawn upon yourself, Mischief to you, and no Benefit to others. He that spits against the Wind, spits in his own Face.

But, were you to succeed, do you imagine any Good would be done by it? You yourself may find it easy to live a virtuous Life, without the Assistance afforded by Religion; you having a clear Perception of the Advantages of Virtue, and the Disadvantages of Vice, and possessing a Strength of Resolution sufficient to enable you to resist common Temptations. But think how great a Proportion of Mankind consists of weak and ignorant Men and Women, and of inexperienc'd, and inconsiderate Youth of both Sexes, who have need of the Motives of Religion to restrain them from Vice, to support

their Virtue, and retain them in the Practice of it till it becomes *habitual*, which is the great Point for its Security. And perhaps you are indebted to her originally, that is, to your Religious Education, for the Habits of Virtue upon which you now justly value yourself. You might easily display your excellent Talents of reasoning upon a less hazardous subject, and thereby obtain a Rank with our most distinguish'd Authors. For among us it is not necessary, as among the Hottentots, that a Youth, to be receiv'd into the Company of men, should prove his Manhood by beating his Mother.

I would advise you, therefore, not to attempt unchaining the Tyger, but to burn this Piece before it is seen by any other Person; whereby you will save yourself a great deal of Mortification from the Enemies it may raise against you, and perhaps a good deal of Regret and Repentence.

CHAPTER III

Franklin, the Philanthropist and Citizen

IT may be that, if Franklin had asked the angel, who made the room of Abou Ben Adhem rich, and like a lily in bloom, whether his name was among the names of those who loved the Lord, the angel might have replied: "Nay not so"; but there can be no question that like Ben Adhem Franklin could with good right have added,

> "I pray thee then,
> Write me as one that loves his fellow-men."

As we have said, the desire to promote the welfare of his fellow-creatures was the real religion of his life—a zealous, constant religion which began with his early manhood and ceased only with his end. This fact reveals itself characteristically in a letter written by him to his wife just after he had narrowly escaped shipwreck off Falmouth Harbor on his second voyage to England. "Were I a Roman Catholic," he said, "perhaps I should on this occasion vow to build a chapel to some saint; but as I am not, if I were to vow at all, it should be to build a *light house*."

The weaker side of human character was, in all its aspects, manifest enough to his humorous perceptions. In an amusing paragraph in the *Autobiography*, he tells us how once in his youth he irresolutely adhered to his

vegetarian scruples, even when his nose was filled with the sweet savor of frying fish, until he recollected that he had seen some smaller fish removed from their stomachs. Then thought he, "If you eat one another, I don't see why we mayn't eat you." "So convenient a thing," he adds, "it is to be a *reasonable creature*, since it enables one to find or make a reason for everything one has a mind to do." On another occasion, he was so disgusted with the workings of human reason as to regret that we had not been furnished with a sound, sensible instinct instead. At intervals, the sly humor dies away into something like real, heartfelt censure of his kind, especially when he reflects upon the baleful state of eclipse into which human happiness passes when overcast by war. Among other reasons, he hated war, because he deprecated everything that tended to check the multiplication of the human species which he was almost ludicrously eager to encourage. No writer, not even Malthus, who was very deeply indebted to him, has ever had a keener insight into the philosophy of population, and no man has ever been a more enthusiastic advocate of the social arrangements which furnish the results for the application of this philosophy. In one of her letters to him, we find his daughter, Sally, saying: "As I know my dear Papa likes to hear of weddings, I will give him a list of my acquaintance that has entered the matrimonial state since his departure." And in one of his letters to his wife, when he was in England on his first mission, he wrote: "The Accounts you give me of the Marriages of our friends are very agreeable. I love to hear of everything that tends to increase the Number of good People."[1] The one

[1] In his Plan for Settling Two Western Colonies in North America, Franklin says ruefully that, if the English did not flow westwardly into the great country back of the Appalachian Mountains on both sides of the Ohio, and between that river and the Lakes, which would undoubtedly (perhaps in less than another century) become a populous and powerful dominion, and a great accession of power either to England or France,

thing in French customs that appears to have met with his disapproval was the inclination of French mothers to escape the burdens of maternity. In a letter to George Whatley, he ventured the conjecture that in the year 1785 only one out of every two infants born in Paris was being nursed by its own mother.

Is it right [he asked] to encourage this monstrous Deficiency of natural Affection? A Surgeon I met with here excused the Women of Paris, by saying, seriously, that they *could not* give suck; "*Car*," *dit il*, "*Elles n'ont point de tetons*." ("For," said he, "They have no teats.") He assur'd me it was a Fact, and bade me look at them, and observe how flat they were on the Breast; "they have nothing more there," said he, "than I have upon the Back of my hand." I have since thought that there might be some Truth in his Observation, and that, possibly, Nature, finding they made no use of Bubbies, has left off giving them any. I wish Success to the new Project of assisting the Poor to keep their Children at home [Franklin adds later in this letter] because I think there is no Nurse like a Mother (or not many), and that, if Parents did not immediately send their Infants out of their Sight, they would in a few days begin to love them, and thence be spurr'd to greater Industry for their Maintenance.

Among his most delightful observations are these on marriage in a letter to John Sargent:

The Account you give me of your Family is pleasing, except that your eldest Son continues so long unmarried. I hope he does not intend to live and die in Celibacy. The Wheel of Life, that has roll'd down to him from Adam without Interruption, should not stop with him. I would not have one dead unbearing Branch in the Genealogical Tree of the Sargents. The married State is, after all our Jokes, the happiest,

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the French, with the aid of the Indians, would, by cutting off new means of subsistence, discourage marriages among the English, and keep them from increasing; thus (if the expression might be allowed) killing thousands of their children before they were born.

being conformable to our natures. Man & Woman have each of them Qualities & Tempers, in which the other is deficient, and which in Union contribute to the common Felicity. Single and separate, they are not the compleat human Being; they are like the odd Halves of Scissors; they cannot answer the End of their Formation.

Equally delightful are his observations upon the same subject in a letter to John Alleyne after Alleyne's marriage:

Had you consulted me, as a Friend, on the Occasion, Youth on both sides I should not have thought any Objection. Indeed, from the matches that have fallen under my Observation, I am rather inclin'd to think, that early ones stand the best Chance for Happiness. The Tempers and habits of young People are not yet become so stiff and uncomplying, as when more advanced in Life; they form more easily to each other, and hence many Occasions of Disgust are removed. And if Youth has less of that Prudence, that is necessary to conduct a Family, yet the Parents and elder Friends of young married Persons are generally at hand to afford their Advice, which amply supplies that Defect; and, by early Marriage, Youth is sooner form'd to regular and useful Life; and possibly some of those Accidents, Habits or Connections, that might have injured either the Constitution, or the Reputation, or both, are thereby happily prevented.

Particular Circumstances of particular Persons may possibly some-times make it prudent to delay entering into that State; but in general, when Nature has render'd our Bodies fit for it, the Presumption is in Nature's Favour, that she has not judg'd amiss in making us desire it. Late Marriages are often attended, too, with this further Inconvenience, that there is not the same Chance the parents shall live to see their offspring educated. "*Late Children*," says the Spanish Proverb, "*are early Orphans*." A melancholy Reflection to those, whose Case it may be! With us in America, Marriages are generally in the Morning of Life; our Children are therefore educated and settled in the World by Noon, and thus, our Business being done, we have an Afternoon and

Evening of chearful Leisure to ourselves; such as your Friend at present enjoys. By these early Marriages we are blest with more Children; and from the Mode among us, founded in Nature, of every Mother suckling and nursing her own Child, more of them are raised. Thence the swift Progress of Population among us, unparallel'd in Europe.

Then, after speaking of the fate of many in England who, having deferred marriage too long, find at length that it is too late to think of it, and so live all their lives in a situation that greatly lessens a man's value, he comes back to what seems to have been a favorite course of illustration of his in relation to marriage. "An odd Volume of a Set of Books you know is not worth its proportion of the Set, and what think you of the Usefulness of an odd Half of a Pair of Scissors? It can not well cut anything. It may possibly serve to scrape a Trencher." With these views about marriage, it is not surprising to find Franklin employing in a letter to Joseph Priestley such language about war as this:

Men I find to be a Sort of Beings very badly constructed, as they are generally more easily provok'd than reconcil'd, more disposed to do Mischief to each other than to make Reparation, much more easily deceiv'd than undeceiv'd, and having more Pride and even Pleasure in killing than in begetting one another; for without a Blush they assemble in great armies at Noon-Day to destroy, and when they have kill'd as many as they can, they exaggerate the Number to augment the fancied Glory; but they creep into Corners, or cover themselves with the Darkness of night, when they mean to beget, as being asham'd of a virtuous Action. A virtuous Action it would be, and a vicious one the killing of them, if the Species were really worth producing or preserving; but of this I begin to doubt.

In the same letter, he suggests to the celebrated clergyman and philosopher to whom he was writing that per-

haps as the latter grew older he might look upon the saving of souls as a hopeless project or an idle amusement, repent of having murdered in mephitic air so many honest, harmless mice, and wish that to prevent mischief he had used boys and girls instead of them.[1]

Nor are these by any means the only sentences in Franklin's writings in which he expressed his disgust for the human passions which breed war. A frequently repeated saying of his was that there hardly ever existed such a thing as a bad peace or a good war. "All Wars," he declared to Mrs. Mary Hewson, after the establishment of peace between Great Britain and her revolted colonies, "are Follies, very expensive, and very mischievous ones. When will Mankind be convinced of this, and agree to settle their Differences by Arbitration? Were they to do it, even by the Cast of a Dye, it would be better than by Fighting and destroying each other."

I join with you most cordially [he wrote six months later to Sir Joseph Banks] in rejoicing at the return of Peace. I hope it will be lasting, and that Mankind will at length, as they call themselves reasonable Creatures, have Reason and Sense enough to settle their Differences without cutting Throats; for, in my opinion, *there never was a good War, or a bad Peace.* What vast additions to the Conveniences and Comforts of

[1] The existence of so much evil and misery in the world was a stumbling-block to Franklin as it has been to so many other human beings. In a letter to Jane Mecom, dated Dec. 30, 1770, he told her that he had known in London some forty-five years before a printer's widow, named Ilive, who had required her son by her will to deliver publicly in Salter's Hall a solemn discourse in support of the proposition that this world is the true Hell, or place of punishment for the spirits who have transgressed in a better place and are sent here to suffer for their sins as animals of all sorts. "In fact," Franklin continued, "we see here, that every lower animal has its enemy, with proper inclinations, faculties, and weapons, to terrify, wound, and destroy it; and that men, who are uppermost, are devils to one another; so that, on the established doctrine of the goodness and justice of the great Creator, this apparent state of general and systematical mischief seemed to demand some such supposition as Mrs. Ilive's, to account for it consistently with the honour of the Deity."

Living might Mankind have acquired, if the Money spent in Wars had been employed in Works of public utility! What an extension of Agriculture, even to the Tops of our Mountains: what Rivers rendered navigable, or joined by Canals: what Bridges, Aqueducts, new Roads, and other public Works, Edifices, and Improvements, rendering England a compleat Paradise, might have been obtained by spending those Millions in doing good, which in the last War have been spent in doing Mischief; in bringing Misery into thousands of Families, and destroying the Lives of so many thousands of working people, who might have performed the useful labor!

The same sentiments are repeated in a letter to David Hartley:

What would you think of a proposition, if I sh'd make it, of a family compact between England, France and America? America wd be as happy as the Sabine Girls, if she cd be the means of uniting in perpetual peace her father and her husband. What repeated follies are these repeated wars! You do not want to conquer & govern one another. Why then sh'd you continually be employed in injuring & destroying one another? How many excellent things might have been done to promote the internal welfare of each country; What Bridges, roads, canals and other usefull public works & institutions, tending to the common felicity, might have been made and established with the money and men foolishly spent during the last seven centuries by our mad wars in doing one another mischief! You are near neighbors, and each have very respectable qualities. Learn to be quiet and to respect each other's rights. You are all Christians. One is *The Most Christian King*, and the other *Defender of the Faith*. Manifest the propriety of these titles by your future conduct. "By this," says Christ, "shall all men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye love one another." "Seek peace, and ensue it."

We make daily great Improvements in *Natural*, there is one I wish to see in *Moral* Philosophy [he wrote to Richard Price] the Discovery of a Plan, that would induce & oblige Nations to settle their Disputes without first Cutting one

another's Throats. When will human Reason be sufficiently improv'd to see the Advantage of this!

The aspiration is again voiced in a letter to Joseph Priestley:

The rapid Progress *true* Science now makes, occasions my regretting sometimes that I was born so soon. It is impossible to imagine the Height to which may be carried, in a thousand years, the Power of Man over Matter. We may perhaps learn to deprive large Masses of their Gravity, and give them absolute Levity, for the sake of easy Transport. Agriculture may diminish its Labour and double its Produce; all Diseases may by sure means be prevented or cured, not excepting even that of Old Age, and our Lives lengthened at pleasure even beyond the antediluvian Standard. O that moral Science were in as fair a way of Improvement, that Men would cease to be Wolves to one another, and that human Beings would at length learn what they now improperly call Humanity!

Mixed with Franklin's other feelings about war, as we have seen, was a profound sense of its pecuniary wastefulness. It was the greediest of all rat-holes, an agency of impoverishment worse even than the four specified in Poor Richard's couplet,

> "Women and Wine, Game and Deceit,
> Make the Wealth small and the Wants great."

When [he asked Benjamin Vaughan] will princes learn arithmetic enough to calculate, if they want pieces of one another's territory, how much cheaper it would be to buy them, than to make war for them, even though they were to give a hundred year's purchase? But, if glory cannot be valued, and therefore the wars for it cannot be subject to arithmetical calculation so as to show their advantage or disadvantage, at least wars for trade, which have gain for their object, may be proper subjects for such computation; and a trading nation, as well as a single trader, ought to calculate the probabilities of profit and loss, before engaging in any

considerable adventure. This however nations seldom do, and we have had frequent instances of their spending more money in wars for acquiring or securing branches of commerce, than a hundred years' profit or the full enjoyment of them can compensate.

A celebrated philosophical writer, Franklin said in the *Propositions Relative to Privateering*, which he communicated to Richard Oswald, had remarked that, when he considered the destruction to human life, caused by the slave trade, so intimately connected with the industry of the sugar islands, he could scarce look on a morsel of sugar without conceiving it spotted with human blood. If this writer, Franklin added, had considered also the blood of one another which the white nations had shed in fighting for these islands, "he would have imagined his sugar not as spotted only, but as thoroughly dyed red." As for Franklin himself, he was satisfied that the subjects of the Emperor of Germany and the Empress of Russia, who had no sugar islands, consumed sugar cheaper at Vienna and Moscow, with all the charge of transporting it after its arrival in Europe, than the citizens of London or of Paris. "And I sincerely believe," he declared, "that if France and England were to decide, by throwing dice, which should have the whole of their sugar islands, the loser in the throw would be the gainer." The future expense of defending the islands would be saved, the sugar would be bought cheaper by all Europe, if the inhabitants of the islands might make it without interruption, and, whoever imported it, the same revenue might be raised by duties on it at the custom houses of the nation that consumed it. "You know," Franklin observed in his famous letter to his daughter Sally on the Order of the Cincinnati, "everything makes me recollect some Story." As respects war, the inevitable story turned up in one of his letters to Priestley:

In what Light [he said] we are viewed by superior Beings, may be gathered from a Piece of late West India News, which possibly has not yet reached you. A young Angel of Distinction being sent down to this world on some Business, for the first time, had an old courier-spirit assigned him as a Guide. They arriv'd over the Seas of Martinico, in the middle of the long Day of obstinate Fight between the Fleets of Rodney and De Grasse. When, thro' the Clouds of smoke, he saw the Fire of the Guns, the Decks covered with mangled Limbs, and Bodies dead or dying; the ships sinking, burning, or blown into the Air; and the Quantity of Pain, Misery, and Destruction, the Crews yet alive were thus with so much Eagerness dealing round to one another; he turn'd angrily to his Guide, and said: "You blundering Blockhead, you are ignorant of your Business; you undertook to conduct me to the Earth, and you have brought me into Hell!" "No, sir," says the Guide, "I have made no mistake; this is really the Earth, and these are men. Devils never treat one another in this cruel manner; they have more Sense, and more of what Men (vainly) call *Humanity*."

But how little acrid misanthropy there was in this lurid story or in any of the indignant utterances occasionally wrung from Franklin by the sanguinary tendencies of the human race is clearly seen in this very letter; for, after working up his story to its opprobrious climax, he falls back to the genial level of his ordinary disposition:

But to be serious, my dear old Friend [he adds], I love you as much as ever, and I love all the honest Souls that meet at the London Coffee-House. I only wonder how it happen'd that they and my other Friends in England came to be such good Creatures in the midst of so perverse a Generation. I long to see them and you once more, and I labour for Peace with more Earnestness, that I may again be happy in your sweet society.

The truth is that Franklin was no Timon of Athens, and no such thing as lasting misanthropy could find

lodgment in that earth-born and earth-loving nature which fitted into the world as smoothly as its own grass, its running water, or its fruitful plains. If for many generations there has been any man, whose pronouncement, *Homo sum; humani nihil a me alienum puto*, was capable of clothing that trite phrase with its original freshness, this man was Franklin. The day, when the word went out in the humble Milk Street dwelling of his father that another man child was born, was a day that he never regretted; the long years of rational and useful existence which followed he was willing, as has been told, to live all over again, if he could only enjoy the author's privilege of correcting in the second edition the *errata* of the first; in his declining years he could still find satisfaction in the fact that he was afflicted with only three mortal diseases; and during his last twelve months, when he was confined for the most part to his bed, and, in his paroxysms of pain, was obliged to take large doses of laudanum to mitigate his tortures, his fortitude was such as to elicit this striking tribute from his physician, Dr. John Jones:

> In the intervals of pain, he not only amused himself with reading and conversing cheerfully with his family, and a few friends who visited him, but was often employed in doing business of a public as well as private nature, with various persons who waited on him for that purpose; and, in every instance displayed, not only that readiness and disposition of doing good, which was the distinguishing characteristic of his life, but the fullest and clearest possession of his uncommon mental abilities; and not unfrequently indulged himself in those *jeux d'esprit* and entertaining anecdotes, which were the delight of all who heard him.

To the very last his wholesome, sunny spirit was proof against every morbid trial. Dr. Jones tells us further that, even during his closing days, when the severity of his pain drew forth a groan of complaint, he would observe

that he was afraid that he did not bear his sufferings as he ought, acknowledged his grateful sense of the many blessings he had received from that Supreme Being who had raised him from small and low beginnings to such high rank and consideration among men, and made no doubt but his present afflictions were kindly intended to wean him from a world, in which he was no longer fit to act the part assigned to him.

It is plain enough that in practice as well as in precept to Franklin life was ever a welcome gift to be enjoyed so long as corporeal infirmities permit it to be enjoyed, and to be surrendered, when the ends of its institution can no longer be fulfilled, as naturally as we surrender consciousness when we turn into our warmer beds and give ourselves over to our shorter slumbers. The spirit in which he lived is reflected in the concluding paragraph of his *Articles of Belief* in which, with the refrain, "Good God, I thank thee!" at the end of every paragraph except the last, and, with the words, "My Good God, I thank thee!" at the end of the last, he expresses his gratitude to this God for peace and liberty, for food and raiment, for corn and wine and milk and every kind of healthful nourishment, for the common benefits of air and light, for useful fire and delicious water, for knowledge and literature and every useful art, for his friends and *their* prosperity, and for the fewness of his enemies, for all the innumerable benefits conferred on him by the Deity, for life and reason and the use of speech, for health and joy and every pleasant hour. Those thanks for his friends and *their* prosperity was Franklin indeed at his best. On the other hand, the spirit in which he regarded and met the hour of his dissolution is vividly reflected in the lines written by him in his seventy-ninth year:

"If Life's compared to a Feast,
Near Fourscore Years I've been a Guest;

I've been regaled with the best,
And feel quite satisfyd.
'Tis time that I retire to Rest;
Landlord, I thank ye!—Friends, Good Night."

These lines, unsteady upon their poetic feet as they are like all of Franklin's lines, may perhaps be pronounced the best that he ever wrote, but they are not so good as his celebrated epitaph written many years before when the hour at the inn of existence was not so late:

"The Body
of
Benjamin Franklin
Printer,
(Like the cover of an old book,
Its contents torn out,
And stript of its lettering and gilding,)
Lies here, food for worms.
Yet the work itself shall not be lost,
For it will, as he believed, appear once more,
In a new
And more beautiful edition,
Corrected and amended
By
The Author."

So far as we can see, the only quarrel that Franklin had with existence was that he was born too soon to witness many important human achievements, which the future had in store. He was prepared to quit the world quietly when he was duly summoned to do so. The artist who was to paint his portrait for Yale College, he said a few days before his death to Ezra Stiles, must not

delay about it, as his subject might slip through his fingers; but it was impossible for such an inquisitive man to repress the wish that, after his decease, he might be permitted to revisit the globe for the purpose of enjoying the inventions and improvements which had come into existence during his absence: the locomotive, the steamship, the Morse and Marconi telegraphs, the telephone, the autocar, the aeroplane, the abolition of American slavery, Twentieth Century London, Paris and New York.

I have been long impressed [he said in his eighty-third year to the Rev. John Lathrop] with the same sentiments you so well express, of the growing felicity of mankind, from the improvements in philosophy, morals, politics, and even the conveniences of common living, by the invention and acquisition of new and useful utensils and instruments, that I have sometimes almost wished it had been my destiny to be born two or three centuries hence. For invention and improvement are prolific, and beget more of their kind. The present progress is rapid. Many of great importance, now unthought of, will before that period be produced; and then I might not only enjoy their advantages, but have my curiosity gratified in knowing what they are to be. I see a little absurdity in what I have just written, but it is to a friend, who will wink and let it pass, while I mention one reason more for such a wish, which is, that, if the art of physic shall be improved in proportion with other arts, we may then be able to avoid diseases, and live as long as the patriarchs in Genesis; to which I suppose we should make little objection.

Such complete adjustment to all the conditions of human existence, even the harshest, as Franklin exhibited, would, under any circumstances, be an admirable and inspiring thing; but it becomes still more so when we recollect that he prized life mainly for the opportunity that it afforded him to do good. To his own country he rendered services of priceless importance, but it would be utterly misleading to think of him as anything less—to

use a much abused term of his time—than a Friend of Man.

> "Il est . . .
> Surtout pour sa philanthropie,
> L'honneur de l'Amérique, et de l'humanité."

That was what one of his French eulogists sang, and that is what his contemporaries generally felt, about him, and said of him with a thousand and one different variations. It was the general belief of his age that his enlightened intelligence and breadth of charity placed him upon a plateau from which his vision ranged over the wants, the struggles and the aberrations of his fellow beings everywhere, altogether unrefracted by self-interest or national prejudices. He might have scores to settle with Princes, Ministers, Parliaments or Priests, but for the race he had nothing but light and love and compassion. To the poor he was the strong, shrewd, wise man who had broken through the hard incrustations of his own poverty, and preached sound counsels of prudence and thrift as general in their application as the existence of human indigence and folly. To the liberal aspirations of his century, he represented, to use his own figure, the light which all the window-shutters of despotism and priest-craft were powerless to shut out longer. To men of all kinds his benevolent interest in so many different forms in the welfare and progress of human society, his efforts to assuage the ferocity of war, the very rod, with which he disarmed the fury of the storm-cloud, seemed to mark him as a benignant being, widely removed by his sagacity and goodness from the short-sighted and selfish princes and statesmen of his day whose thoughts and aims appeared to be wholly centred upon intrigue and blood.

It was in perfect sincerity that Edmund Burke appealed to Franklin not only as a friend but as the "lover of his species" to assist him in protecting the parole of General

Burgoyne. How well he knew the man may be inferred from his declaration, when it was suggested that selfish considerations of personal safety had brought Franklin to France. "I never can believe," he said, "that he is come thither as a fugitive from his cause in the hour of its distress, or that he is going to conclude a long life, which has brightened every hour it has continued, with so foul and dishonorable flight."

If Franklin is not mistaken, his career as a lover of his species can be traced back to a very early circumstance. In one of his letters, in his old age, to Samuel Mather, the descendant of Increase and Cotton Mather, he states that a mutilated copy of Cotton Mather's *Essays to do Good*, which fell in his way when he was a boy, had influenced his conduct through life, and that, if he had been a useful citizen, the public was indebted for the fact to this book. "I have always set a greater value on the character of a *doer of good*, than on any other kind of reputation," he remarks in the letter. "The noblest question in the world," said Poor Richard, "is what good may I do in it." But, no matter how or when the chance seed was sown, it fell upon ground eager to receive it. It was an observation of Franklin that the quantity of good that may be done by one man, if he will make a business of doing good, is prodigious. The saying in its various forms presupposed the sacrifice of all studies, amusements and avocations. No such self-immolation, it is needless to affirm, marked his versatile and happy career, yet rarely has any single person, whose attention has been engaged by other urgent business besides that of mankind, ever furnished such a pointed example of the truth of the observation.

The first project of a public nature organized by him was the Junto, a project of which he received the hint from the Neighborhood Benefit Societies, established by Cotton Mather, who, it would be an egregious error to

suppose, did nothing in his life but hound hapless wretches to death for witchcraft. The Junto founded by Franklin, when he was a journeyman printer, about twenty-one years of age, was primarily an association for mutual improvement. It met every Friday evening, and its rules, which were drafted by him, required every member in turn to produce one or more queries on some point of morals, politics or natural philosophy, to be discussed by its members, and once every three months to produce and read an essay of his own writing on any subject he pleased. Under the regulations, the debates were to be conducted with a presiding officer in the chair, and in the sincere spirit of inquiry after truth without fondness for dispute or desire for victory. Dogmatism and direct contradiction were made contraband, and prohibited under small pecuniary penalties. With a few rough strokes Franklin etches to the life in the *Autobiography* all the first members of the association. We linger just now only on his portrait of Thomas Godfrey, "a self-taught mathematician, great in his way, and afterward inventor of what is now called Hadley's Quadrant. But he knew little out of his way, and was not a pleasing companion; as, like most great mathematicians I have met with, he expected universal precision in everything said, or was forever denying or distinguishing upon trifles, to the disturbance of all conversation. He soon left us." All of the first members except Robert Grace, a young gentleman of some fortune, derived their livelihood from the simple pursuits of a small provincial town, but all in one way or another were under the spell exerted by a love of reading, or something else outside of the dull treadmill of daily necessity. From the number of journeymen mechanics in it the Junto came to be known in Philadelphia as the Leathern Apron Club. An applicant for initiation had to stand up and declare, with one hand laid upon his breast, that he had "no particular disrespect" for any member of

the Junto; that he loved mankind in general, of whatsoever profession or religion; that he thought no person ought to be harmed in his body, name or goods for mere speculative opinion, or for his external way of worship, that he loved the truth for the truth's sake, and would endeavor impartially to find and receive it, and communicate it to others. In all this the spirit of Franklin is manifest enough.

Quite as manifest, too, is the spirit of Franklin in the twenty-four standing queries which were read at every weekly meeting with "a pause between each while one might fill and drink a glass of wine," and which propounded the following interrogatories:

Have you read over these queries this morning, in order to consider what you might have to offer the Junto touching any one of them viz:?

1. Have you met with anything in the author you last read, remarkable, or suitable to be communicated to the Junto, particularly in history, morality, poetry, physic, travels, mechanic arts, or other parts of knowledge?

2. What new story have you lately heard agreeable for telling in conversation?

3. Hath any citizen in your knowledge failed in his business lately, and what have you heard of the cause?

4. Have you lately heard of any citizen's thriving well, and by what means?

5. Have you lately heard how any present rich man, here or elsewhere, got his estate?

6. Do you know of a fellow-citizen, who has lately done a worthy action, deserving praise and imitation; or who has lately committed an error, proper for us to be warned against and avoid?

7. What unhappy effects of intemperance have you lately observed or heard; of imprudence, of passion, or of any other vice or folly?

8. What happy effects of temperance, prudence, of moderation, or of any other virtue?

9. Have you or any of your acquaintance been lately sick or wounded? if so, what remedies were used, and what were their effects?

10. Whom do you know that are shortly going voyages or journeys, if one should have occasion to send by them?

11. Do you think of anything at present, in which the Junto may be serviceable to *mankind*, to their country, to their friends, or to themselves?

12. Hath any deserving stranger arrived in town since last meeting, that you have heard of?; and what have you heard or observed of his character or merits?; and whether, think you, it lies in the power of the Junto to oblige him, or encourage him as he deserves?

13. Do you know of any deserving young beginner lately set up, whom it lies in the power of the Junto anyway to encourage?

14. Have you lately observed any defect in the laws of your *country*, of which it would be proper to move the legislature for an amendment?; or do you know of any beneficial law that is wanting?

15. Have you lately observed any encroachment on the just liberties of the people?

16. Hath anybody attacked your reputation lately?; and what can the Junto do towards securing it?

17. Is there any man whose friendship you want, and which the Junto, or any of them, can procure for you?

18. Have you lately heard any member's character attacked, and how have you defended it?

19. Hath any man injured you, from whom it is in the power of the Junto to procure redress?

20. In what manner can the Junto or any of them, assist you in any of your honorable designs?

21. Have you any weighty affair on hand in which you think the advice of the Junto may be of service?

22. What benefits have you lately received from any man not present?

23. Is there any difficulty in matters of opinion, of justice, and injustice, which you would gladly have discussed at this time?

24. Do you see anything amiss in the present customs or proceedings of the Junto, which might be amended?

These queries render it obvious that the Junto in actual operation far transcended the scope of a mere association for mutual improvement. Such a strong desire was entertained by its members to bring their friends into it that Franklin finally suggested that each member should organize a separate club, secretly subordinate to the parent body, and in this way help to extend the sphere of the Junto's usefulness; and this suggestion was followed by the formation of five or six such clubs with such names as the Vine, the Union and the Band, which, as time went on, became centres of agitation for the promotion of public aims.

Cotton Mather would scarcely have regarded a club with such liberal principles as the Junto as an improvement upon its prototype, the Neighborhood Benefit Society. But, between the answers to the standing queries of the Junto, its essays, its debates, the declamations, which were also features of its exercises, the jolly songs sung at its annual meeting, and its monthly meetings during mild weather "across the river for bodily exercise," it must have been an agreeable and instructive club indeed. It lasted nearly forty years, and "was," Franklin claims in the *Autobiography*, "the best school of philosophy, morality and politics that then existed in the province." A book, in which he entered memoranda of various kinds in regard to it, shows that he followed its proceedings with the keenest interest.

Is self-interest the rudder that steers mankind?; can a man arrive at perfection in this life?; does it not, in a general way, require great study and intense application for a poor man to become rich and powerful, if he would do it without the forfeiture of his honesty?; why does the flame of a candle tend upward in a spire?; whence comes the dew that stands on the

outside of a tankard that has cold water in it in the summer time?

—such are some of the questions, thoroughly racy of Franklin in his youth, which are shown by this book to have been framed by him for the Junto. After the association had been under way for a time, he suggested that all the books, owned by its members, should be assembled at the room, in which its meetings were held, for convenience of reference in discussion, and so that each member might have the benefit of the volumes belonging to every other member almost as fully as if they belonged to himself. The suggestion was assented to, and one end of the room was filled with such books as the members could spare; but the arrangement did not work well in practice and was soon abandoned.

No sooner, however, did this idea die down than another shot up from its stump. This was the subscription library, now the Philadelphia City Library, founded by Franklin. In the *Autobiography*, he speaks of this library as his first project of a public nature; but it seems to us, as we have already said, that the distinction fairly belongs to the Junto. He brought the project to the attention of the public through formal articles of association, and, by earnest efforts in an unlettered community, which, moreover, had little money to spare for any such enterprise, induced fifty persons, mostly young tradesmen, to subscribe forty shillings each as a contribution to a foundation fund for the first purchase of books, and ten shillings more annually as a contribution for additional volumes. Later, the association was incorporated. It was while soliciting subscriptions at this time that Franklin was taught by the objections or reserve with which his approaches were met the "impropriety of presenting one's self as the proposer of any useful project, that might be suppos'd to raise one's reputation in the smallest degree above that of one's

neighbors, when one has need of their assistance to accomplish that project." He, therefore, kept out of sight as much as possible, and represented the scheme as that of a number of friends who had requested him to submit it to such persons as they thought lovers of reading. This kind of self-effacement was attended with such happy consequences that he never failed to adopt it subsequently upon similar occasions. From his successful experience, he says in the *Autobiography*, he could heartily recommend it. "The present little sacrifice of your vanity," to use his own words, "will afterwards be amply repaid. If it remains a while uncertain to whom the merit belongs, some one more vain than yourself will be encouraged to claim it, and then even envy will be disposed to do you justice by plucking those assumed feathers, and restoring them to their right owner." Alexander Wedderburn's famous philippic, of which we shall have something to say further on, did not consist altogether of misapplied adjectives. Franklin *was* at times the "wily American," but usually for the purpose of improving the condition of his fellow-creatures in spite of themselves.

The library, once established, grew apace. From time to time, huge folios and quartos were added to it by purchase or donation, from which nobody profited more than Franklin himself with his insatiable avidity for knowledge. The first purchase of books for it was made by Peter Collinson of London, who threw in with the purchase as presents from himself Newton's *Principia* and the *Gardener's Dictionary*, and continued for thirty years to act as the purchasing agent of the institution, accompanying each additional purchase with additional presents from himself. Evidence is not wanting that the first arrival of books was awaited with eager expectancy. Among Franklin's memoranda with regard to the Junto we find the following: "When the books of the library

come, every member shall undertake some author, that he may not be without observations to communicate." When the books finally came, they were placed in the assembly room of the Junto; a librarian was selected, and the library was thrown open once a week for the distribution of books. The second year Franklin himself acted as librarian, and for printing a catalogue of the first books shortly after their arrival, and for other printing services, he was exempted from the payment of his annual ten shillings for two years.

Among the numerous donations of money, books and curiosities made to the library, were gifts of books and electrical apparatus by Thomas Penn, and the gift of an electrical tube, with directions for its use, by Peter Collinson, which proved of incalculable value to science in the hands of Franklin who promptly turned it to experimental purposes. When Peter Kalm, the Swedish naturalist, was in Philadelphia in 1748, "many little libraries," organized on the same plan as the original library, had sprung from it. Non-subscribers were then allowed to take books out of it, subject to pledges of indemnity sufficient to cover their value, and to the payment for the use of a folio of eight pence a week, for the use of a quarto of six pence, and for the use of any other book of four pence. Kalm, as a distinguished stranger, was allowed the use of any book in the collection free of charge. In 1764, the shares of the library company were worth nearly twenty pounds, and its collections were then believed to have a value of seventeen hundred pounds. In 1785, the number of volumes was 5487; in 1807, 14,457; in 1861, 70,000; and in 1912, 237,677. After overflowing more contracted quarters, the contents of the library have finally found a home in a handsome building at the northwest corner of Locust and Juniper Streets and in the Ridgway Branch Building at the corner of Broad and Christian Streets. But, never, it is safe to say,

will this library, enlarged and efficiently administered as it is, perform such an invaluable service as it did in its earlier years. "This," Franklin declares in the *Autobiography*, "was the mother of all the North American subscription libraries, now so numerous. It is become a great thing itself, and continually increasing. These libraries have improved the general conversation of the Americans, made the common tradesmen and farmers as intelligent as most gentlemen from other countries, and perhaps have contributed in some degree to the stand so generally made throughout the colonies in defence of their privileges."

Franklin next turned his attention to the reform of the city watch. Under the existing system, it was supervised by the different constables of the different wards of Philadelphia in turn. The Dogberry in charge would warn a number of householders to attend him for the night. Such householders as desired to be wholly exempt from the service could secure exemption by paying him six shillings a year, which was supposed to be expended by him in hiring substitutes, but the fund accumulated in this way was much more than was necessary for the purpose and rendered the constableship a position of profit. Often the ragamuffins gathered up by a constable as his aids were quite willing to act as such for no reward except a little drink. The consequence was that his underlings were for the most part tippling when they should have been moving around on their beats. Altogether, they seem to have been men who would not have been slow to heed the older Dogberry's advice to his watchmen that, if one of them bid a vagrom man stand, and he did not stand, to take no note of him, but to let him go, and presently call the rest of the watch together and thank God that he was rid of a knave.

To this situation Franklin addressed himself by writing a paper for the Junto, not only setting forth the abuses of

the existing system but insisting upon its injustice in imposing the same six-shilling tax upon a poor widow, whose whole property to be guarded by the watch did not perhaps exceed the value of fifty pounds, as upon the wealthiest merchant who had thousands of pounds' worth of goods in his stores. His proposal was the creation of a permanent paid police to be maintained by an equal, proportional property tax. The idea was duly approved by the Junto, and communicated to its affiliated clubs, as if it had arisen in each of them, and, though it was not immediately carried into execution, yet the popular agitation, which ensued over it, paved the way for a law providing for it which was enacted a few years afterwards, when the Junto and the other clubs had acquired more popular influence.

About the same time, the same indefatigable propagandist wrote for the Junto a paper, which was subsequently published, on the different accidents and defaults by which houses were set on fire, with warnings against them, and suggestions as to how they might be averted. There was much public talk about it, and a company of thirty persons was soon formed, under the name of the Union Fire Company, for the purpose of more effectively extinguishing fires, and removing and protecting goods endangered by them. Under its articles of agreement, every member was obliged to keep always in good order, and fit for use, a certain number of leather buckets, with strong bags and baskets for transporting goods, which were to be brought to every fire; and it was further agreed that the members of the company were to meet once a month and spend a social evening together in the discussion and interchange of such useful ideas as occurred to them upon the subject of fires. The formation of this company led to the formation of one company after another until the associations became so numerous as to include most of the inhabitants of Philadelphia who were

men of property. It was still flourishing more than fifty years after its establishment, when its history was narrated in the *Autobiography*, and Franklin and one other person, a year older than himself, were the only survivors of its original members. The small fines, paid by its members as penalties for absence from its monthly meetings, had been used to such advantage in the purchase of fire-engines, ladders, fire-hooks and other useful implements for the different companies that Franklin then questioned whether there was a city in the world better provided than Philadelphia with the means for repressing incipient conflagrations. Indeed, he said, since the establishment of these companies, the city had never lost by fire more than one or two houses at a time; and often flames were extinguished before the house they threatened had been half consumed.

"Ideas will string themselves like Ropes of Onions," Franklin once declared. This was certainly true of the plans which his public spirit devised for the improvement of Philadelphia. The next thing to which his hand was turned was the creation of an academy. In 1743, he drew up a proposal for one, but, being disappointed in his efforts to persuade the Reverend Mr. Peters to act as its head, he let the project lie dormant for a time. While it remained so, remembering Poor Richard's maxim that leisure is time for doing something useful, he passed to the organization of a system of military defences for the Province and the founding of a Philosophical Society. Of the former task we shall speak hereafter. The latter was initiated by a circular letter from him to his various learned friends in the Northern Colonies, proposing the formation of a society for the purpose of promoting a commerce of speculation, discovery and experimentation between its members with regard to scientific interests of every sort. A correspondence with the Royal Society of London and the Dublin Society and "all philosophical

experiments that let light into the nature of things, tend to increase the power of man over matter, and multiply the conveniences or pleasures of life" were among the things held out in the proposal. Colonial America was far more favorable to practical activity than to philosophical investigation, but the society, nevertheless, performed an office of no little usefulness. When Franklin built a new wing to his residence in Philadelphia, after his return from Paris, he provided a large apartment on the first floor of this addition for the accommodation of the American Philosophical Society into which this Society had been merged. When he made his will, he was the President of the new society, and he bequeathed to it his *History of the Academy of Sciences*, in sixty or seventy volumes quarto; and, when he died, one of its members, Dr. William Smith, pronounced an eulogy upon his character and services. The wing of his house, in which space was set apart for the society, was itself, in its precautions against fire, one worthy of a vigilant and enlightened philosopher. None of the woodwork of one room, for instance, communicated with the woodwork of any other. Franklin thought, however, that the staircases should have been of stone, and the floors tiled as in Paris; and that the roof should have been either tiled or slated.[1]

When the Philosophical Society of his early life had been founded, and the restoration of peace between Great Britain and her enemies had diverted his mind from his plans for the military protection of Philadelphia, he turned again to the slumbering Academy. His first step was to secure the assistance of a considerable number of active friends, of whom the Junto furnished a good part, and his

[1] The American Philosophical Society Held at Philadelphia for Promoting Useful Knowledge was formed in 1769 by the union of the Philosophical Society founded by Franklin, which, after languishing for many years, was revived in 1767, and The American Society Held at Philadelphia for the Promotion of Useful Knowledge; and Franklin, though absent in England, was elected its first President.

next to write and publish a pamphlet entitled *Proposals Relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania.* In this pamphlet he was careful, as usual, to bring his aim forward rather as that of a group of public-spirited gentlemen than of himself. It was distributed gratuitously among the most prominent citizens of Philadelphia, and, as soon as he thought that their minds had been reduced to a receptive condition by its appeal, he solicited subscriptions for the establishment and maintenance of the Academy, payable in five annual instalments. Four thousand pounds were subscribed, and Franklin and Tench Francis, the attorney-general of the province, and the uncle of Sir Philip Francis, of Junius fame, were appointed by the subscribers to draw up a constitution for the government of the foundation. This was drafted and signed; a house was hired, masters were engaged, and the institution was promptly opened. So fast did the scholars increase that need was soon felt for a larger school-edifice. This was happily found in the great building which had sprung up at the sound of Whitefield's voice as if at the sound of Amphion's lyre. By an arrangement between the Trustees for the building, of whom Franklin was one, and the Trustees for the Academy, of whom Franklin was also one, the building was deeded to the latter Trustees, upon the condition that they would discharge the indebtedness with which it was burdened, keep forever open in it a large hall for occasional preachers, according to the original intent of its builders, and maintain a free school for the instruction of poor children. With some internal changes, and the purchase of an addition to its site, the edifice was soon, under the superintendence of Franklin, made ready for the use of the Academy. Afterwards, the Trustees for the Academy were incorporated, and the institution received various donations from British friends, the Proprietaries and the Provincial Assembly, and, finally, grew into the University of

Pennsylvania. Franklin was one of its Trustees for more than forty years, and had, he says in the *Autobiography*, the very great pleasure of seeing a number of the youth, who had received their education in it, distinguished by their improved abilities, serviceable in public stations and ornaments to their country.

In none of his creations did Franklin display a keener interest than in the Academy. From its inception until he embarked upon his second voyage to England, his correspondence contains frequent references to it. One of his most earnest desires was to secure the celebrated Episcopal clergyman, Dr. Samuel Johnson, of Connecticut, afterwards the president of King's College, New York, as its Rector. A salary of one hundred pounds sterling per annum, the opportunity to deliver a lecture now and then in the large hall, set apart for what might in our day be called "tramp" preachers, until he could collect a congregation strong enough to build him a church, the usual marriage and christening fees, paid by persons of the best social standing, the occasional presents bestowed by wealthy individuals upon a minister of their liking, and the opening that, as time went on, the change of residence might afford to his son, who in the beginning might be employed as a tutor at a salary of sixty or seventy pounds per annum, were the allurements with which the reverend doctor was approached by Franklin. To the doctor's objection that another Episcopal church in Philadelphia might sap the strength of the existing one, the resourceful tempter replied with the illustration, which has been so much admired:

> I had for several years nailed against the wall of my house a pigeon-box, that would hold six pair; and, though they bred as fast as my neighbours' pigeons, I never had more than six pair, the old and strong driving out the young and weak, and obliging them to seek new habitations. At length I put up an

additional box with apartments for entertaining twelve pair more; and it was soon filled with inhabitants, by the overflowing of my first box, and of others in the neighbourhood. This I take to be a parallel case with the building a new church here.

In spite of everything, however, Doctor Johnson proved obdurate to Franklin's coaxing pen.

The Academy was opened in 1749. In a letter to Jared Eliot in 1751, Franklin informs us that the annual salaries paid by it were as follows: The Rector, who taught Latin and Greek, two hundred pounds, the English Master, one hundred and fifty pounds, the Mathematical Professor, one hundred and twenty-five pounds, and three assistant tutors each, sixty pounds. The annual fee paid by each pupil was four pounds. With one of the persons who did act as Rector, Franklin seems to have been on intimate terms. This was David Martin, who, after a brief incumbency, died suddenly of a quinsy, and was buried in much state. In a letter to William Strahan, Franklin speaks of him as "Honest David Martin, . . . my principal Antagonist at Chess." Vice-Provost at one time was Francis Alison, whom Franklin in a letter to Jared Eliot in 1755 introduced as his "particular friend," and twenty or more folio pages, large paper, well filled on the subjects of Agriculture, Philosophy, Eliot's own Catholic Divinity and various other points of learning equally useful and engaging. With still another Rector, Dr. William Smith, Franklin's relations were at first very friendly, but afterwards, when Smith espoused the cause of the Proprietary Party and began to abuse Franklin unstintedly, became so constrained that the two ceased to be on speaking terms. In an early letter to Smith, before Smith became Rector, Franklin said that he should be extremely glad to see and converse with him in Philadelphia, and to correspond with him after he settled in

England; "for," he observed, "an acquaintance and communication with men of learning, virtue, and public spirit, is one of my greatest enjoyments." In the same letter, Franklin stated that the mathematical school was pretty well furnished with instruments, and that the English library was a good one, and included a middling apparatus for experimental philosophy, which they purposed to complete speedily. The library left by James Logan, the accomplished Quaker, to the public, "one of the best collections in America," in the opinion of Franklin, was also shortly to be opened. Indeed, Franklin was in hopes, he further declared, that in a few years they would see a perfect institution. In another letter to Smith, written a few days later, he said in reference to a paper on *The Ideal College of Mirania* written by Smith, "For my part, I know not when I have read a piece that has more affected me; so noble and just are the sentiments, so warm and animated the language." He was too frank a man, however, not to express the wish that the author had omitted from this performance certain reflections upon the discipline and government of Oxford and Cambridge Universities and certain outbreaks of resentment against the author's adversaries. "In such cases," he remarked, "the noblest victory is obtained by neglect, and by shining on." He little knew how soon he would be called upon to reck his own rede. A few years later, Franklin thanks Whitefield for a generous benefaction to the German school. "They go on pretty well," he writes, "and will do better," he adds dryly, in terms which make it apparent enough that the honeymoon of early prepossession was over, "when Mr. Smith, who has at present the principal Care of them, shall learn to mind Party-writing and Party Politicks less, and his proper Business more; which I hope time will bring about." In the succeeding November he was not even on speaking terms with Smith. This fact was communicated by him to

Peter Collinson in a letter with this statement about Smith: "He has scribbled himself into universal Dislike here; the Proprietary Faction alone countenances him a little; but the Academy dwindles, and will come to nothing if he is continued." A few weeks later in another letter to Collinson the case against Smith is stated more specifically: "Smith continues still in the Academy; but I imagine will not much longer, unless he mends his Manners greatly, for the Schools decline on his Account. The Number of Scholars, at present, that pay, not exceeding 118, tho' they formerly were 200." From a letter to David Hall, written by Franklin during his second sojourn in England, it would appear that Smith was quicker to pay off debts of resentment than any other kind. In this letter the writer tells Hall that Osborne, the London bookseller, had asked him whether he would be safe in selling to Smith "a large Cargo of Books," and that he had told Osborne that he believed that his "Townsmen who were Smith's Creditors would be glad to see him come back with a Cargo of any kind, as they might have some Chance of being paid out of it." Smith on his part did not fail to do all in his power to keep Franklin from shining on. In a letter to Caleb Whitefoord shortly after his second return from England in 1762, Franklin borrowed a phrase from a line in *The New Foundling Hospital for Wit.* "The Piece from your own Pencil," he said, "is acknowledg'd to bear a strong and striking Likeness, but it is otherwise such a picture of your Friend, as Dr. Smith would have drawn, *black, and all black.*" But when it comes to what Franklin in the *Autobiography* calls "negrofying," he, though he had very little inclination for that kind of competition, was no mean artist himself, if it was an antagonist like Smith upon whose face the pigment was to be laid.

I do not wonder at the behaviour you mention of Dr. Smith towards me [he wrote to Polly Stevenson], for I have

long since known him thoroughly. I made that Man my Enemy by doing him too much Kindness. 'Tis the honestest Way of acquiring an Enemy. And, since 'tis convenient to have at least one Enemy, who by his Readiness to revile one on all Occasions, may make one careful of one's Conduct, I shall keep him an Enemy for that purpose; and shall observe your good Mother's Advice, never again to receive him as a Friend. She once admir'd the benevolent Spirit breath'd in his Sermons. She will now see the Justness of the Lines your Laureate Whitehead addresses to his Poets, and which I now address to her:

"Full many a peevish, envious, slanderous Elf
Is, in his Works, Benevolence itself.
For all Mankind, unknown, his Bosom heaves;
He only injures those, with whom he lives,
Read then the Man;—does *Truth* his Actions guide,
Exempt from *Petulance*, exempt from *Pride?*
To social Duties does his Heart attend,
As Son, as Father, Husband, Brother, *Friend?*
Do those, who know him, love him? If they do,
You've *my* Permission: you may love him too."

Several months later some observations upon the character of Doctor Smith, equally emphatic, found their way into a letter from Franklin to William Strahan. "D^r^ Kelly in his Letter," he said in regard to a letter to Strahan in which Dr. Kelly, a fellow of the Royal Society, had indicated very plainly what he thought of Dr. Smith, "appears the same sensible, worthy, friendly Man I ever found him; and Smith, as usual, just his Reverse.—I have done with him: For I believe nobody here (Philadelphia) will prevail with me to give him another Meeting." In his preface to the speech of Joseph Galloway, Franklin even refers to Smith as "the Poisoner of other Characters." In one of his letters William Franklin referred to him as "that Miscreant Parson Smith." An obscure, or comparatively obscure, person, who is so unfortunate as to

have a feud with a great man, is likely to experience some difficulty in obtaining justice at the hands of Posterity which is always ready to retain any number of clever brushes to whitewash the latter and to smear a black coat over the former. But it must be admitted that anyone who quarrelled with such a social, genial, well-balanced being as Franklin cannot hope to escape a very strong presumption that the fault was his own. There is evidence, at any rate, that, on one occasion, when Smith was in England, and had written a letter to Dr. Fry, the President of St. John's College, Oxford, in which Franklin was aspersed, the latter was induced to meet him at Strahan's house, and succeeded in drawing from him, after the letter to Dr. Fry had been read over, paragraph by paragraph, an acknowledgment that it contained many particulars in which the writer had been misled by wrong information, and that the whole was written with too much rancor and asperity. Indeed, Smith even promised that he would write to Dr. Fry admitting the respects in which his statements were false; but, when pressed by Strahan to write this letter on the spot, he declined to do so, though stating that he would call upon Strahan in a day or so and show it to him before it was sent; which he never did. On the contrary, when subsequently questioned at Oxford concerning his promise to write such a letter, he "denied the whole, & even treated the question as a Calumny." So wrote Dr. Kelly to Strahan in the letter already mentioned by us. "I make no other comment on this behaviour," said Dr. Kelly further, "than in considering him (Smith) extremely unworthy of the Honour, he has received, from our University." The fact that, despite all this, at Franklin's death, Dr. Smith, at the request of the American Philosophical Society, made Franklin's character and career the subject of an eulogistic address is certainly calculated to induce us all to unite in the prayer of Franklin in his *Articles of*

Belief to be delivered from "Anger (that momentary Madness)."

Dr. Smith proved to be one fly in the Academy gallipot. The other was the extent to which the Latin School was pampered at the expense of the English School which was very close to the heart of Franklin. Its insidious encroachments steadily went on until finally the English School scarcely had a foothold in the institution at all. The result was that in 1769 it had been reduced from its first flourishing condition, when, if Franklin may be believed, the Academy was attended by some little boys under seven, who could deliver an oration with more propriety than most preachers, to a state of bare sufferance. The exercises in English reading and speaking, once the delight of the Trustees and of the parents and other relations of the boys, when these boys were trained by Mr. Dove, the English Master, with all the different modulations of voice required by sense and subject, languished after his resignation on account of his meagre salary, and at length, under the blighting neglect of the Trustees, were wholly discontinued. The English school, to use Franklin's forceful expression, was simply starved.

All this was set forth in a long, dignified and able remonstrance which he wrote in nearly his best manner some ten months before his death when his body was racked at times by excruciating pains. In this paper, he narrated with uncommon clearness and skill the gradual succession of influences and events by which the English School had been reduced to a condition of atrophy, and contended that the intentions of the founders of the Academy had been ruthlessly and unconscionably abused. When we recall the circular letter in which he proposed the establishment of the Academy and the fact that it is by no means lacking in deference to the dead languages, which still held the human mind in bondage so firmly, we cannot but feel that the founders of the Academy were

not quite so alive to the supreme importance of the English School as Franklin would make out. The truth was that a long time was yet to elapse before the minds of educated men could become emancipated enough to see that a living language, which they are using every day, is quite as worthy of consideration, to say the least, as one which fulfills its highest function in perfecting that use with its own rare discipline, strength and beauty. Franklin saw this before most men of his time, first, because his own lack of academic training saved him from many of the narrowing effects of tradition and routine, and, secondly, because it was idle to expect any but a severely practical view of the relative importance of the dead languages and English from a man who did not shrink from even testing the readiness of the public mind to give its assent to radical alterations in the Lord's Prayer and the Episcopal Prayer Book. Be this as it may, Franklin did not hesitate in this paper to express in the strongest terms his sense of the inutility of Latin and Greek as parts of the course of instruction at the Academy, and, of course, a picturesque illustration of his proposition was duly forthcomng.

At what Time [he said], Hats were first introduced we know not, but in the last Century they were universally worn thro'-out Europe. Gradually, however, as the Wearing of Wigs, and Hair nicely dress'd prevailed, the putting on of Hats was disused by genteel People, lest the curious Arrangements of the Curls and Powdering should be disordered; and Umbrellas began to supply their Place; yet still our Considering the Hat as a part of Dress continues so far to prevail, that a Man of fashion is not thought dress'd without having one, or something like one, about him, which he carries under his Arm. So that there are a multitude of the politer people in all the courts and capital cities of Europe, who have never, nor their fathers before them, worn a hat otherwise than as a *chapeau bras*, though the utility of such a mode of wearing it is by no means apparent, and it is attended not only with some expense, but with a degree of constant trouble.

The still prevailing custom of having schools for teaching generally our children in these days, the Latin and Greek languages, I consider therefore, in no other light than as the *Chapeau bras* of modern Literature.

Poor Richard had his word to say about the man who "was so learned, that he could name a horse in nine languages: so ignorant that he bought a cow to ride on."

This, however, was not the spirit in which Franklin sought to recruit the deficiencies of his own education—an effort which proved so extraordinarily successful that we are inclined to think that in the pedagogic insight as well as extensive knowledge, disclosed in the circular letter proposing the establishment of the Academy, the "Idea of the English School Sketch'd Out For The Consideration Of The Trustees Of The Philadelphia Academy," and "The Observations Relative To The Intentions Of The Original Founders Of The Academy In Philadelphia" we have the most striking proofs after all of the natural power and assimilative capacity of a mind which, be it recollected, never had any teacher but itself after its possessor became ten years of age.

In the *Autobiography* we are told by Franklin that he was unable to remember when he could not read, that he was sent to the grammar school in Boston when he was eight years of age, that, after he had been at this school for not quite one year, though in that time he had become the head of his class, and had even been advanced to the next class above it,[1] he was shifted by his father to a school for writing and arithmetic in Boston, kept by a then famous man, Mr. George Brownell; that under Brownell

[1] As a token of his sense of obligation to the instruction derived by him in his boyhood from a free Boston grammar school, Franklin bequeathed the sum of one hundred pounds sterling to the free schools of that city, subject to the condition that it was to be invested, and that the interest produced by it was to be annually laid out in silver medals, to be awarded as prizes.

he acquired fair writing pretty soon, but made no progress in arithmetic, and that, at ten years of age, he was taken home to assist his father in his business as a tallow chandler and soap boiler. Such was all the education except what was self-imparted that the founder of the University of Pennsylvania had to draw upon when he outlined the future courses of instruction of the Academy.

But this self-imparted education was no mean one. Putting altogether out of sight the general reading to which during a large part of his youth Franklin devoted every moment left him by his duties, when he was about sixteen years of age, having been made ashamed on some occasion of his ignorance of figures, he went through the whole of Cocker's *Arithmetic* by himself with the greatest ease, and followed the feat up by acquainting himself with such little geometry as was contained in Seller's and Shermy's books on Navigation. Some ten or eleven years later, he renewed the study of languages; for, short as was his connection with the Boston grammar school, he had obtained from it some knowledge of Latin. He quickly mastered French, so far as to be able to read French books with facility. Italian he learned by refusing to play chess with a friend who was also learning it, except upon the condition that the victor in every game was to have the right to impose upon his defeated adversary tasks in Italian which the latter was to be bound in point of honor to perform before the next bout. "As we play'd pretty equally," says Franklin, "we thus beat one another into that language." With a little painstaking, he afterwards acquired enough Spanish to read Spanish books too. Then it was that, after acquiring this knowledge of French, Italian and Spanish, he was surprised to find on looking over a Latin testament that he had so much more familiarity with Latin than he imagined. This encouraged him to apply himself to that language

again, which he did with the more success, now that the three modern languages had smoothed his way.

From these circumstances [he observes in the *Autobiography*], I have thought that there is some inconsistency in our common mode of teaching languages. We are told that it is proper to begin first with the Latin, and, having acquir'd that, it will be more easy to attain those modern languages which are deriv'd from it; and yet we do not begin with the Greek, in order more easily to acquire the Latin. It is true that, if you can clamber and get to the top of a staircase without using the steps, you will more easily gain them in descending; but certainly, if you begin with the lowest you will with more ease ascend to the top; and I would, therefore offer it to the consideration of those who superintend the education of our youth, whether since many of those who begin with the Latin quit the same after spending some years without having made any great proficiency, and what they have learnt becomes almost useless, so that their time has been lost, it would not have been better to have begun with the French, proceeding to the Italian, etc.; for, tho', after spending the same time, they should quit the study of languages and never arrive at the Latin, they would, however, have acquired another tongue or two, that, being in modern use, might be serviceable to them in common life.

Even if some design for the benefit of the public did not originate with Franklin, it was likely to fall back ultimately upon him for success. When Dr. Thomas Bond undertook to establish a hospital in Philadelphia, he was compelled by the chariness with which his requests for subscriptions were received, before it was known how Franklin felt about the project, to come to Franklin with the admission that he had found that to put any such public project through in Philadelphia it was necessary to enlist his support. The response was not only a subscription by Franklin but also the inevitable appeal from his hand, pointing out the need for the hospital. After a

stroke from that wand, the rock began to yield water more abundantly, but not so copiously that Franklin did not see that legislative aid was necessary as well as private liberality. The country voters, as is usual still in such cases in America, were inclined to think that the townsfolk were enjoying more than their just share of the blessings of civil society. They alleged that the hospital would be of exclusive benefit to the city, and even doubted whether the movement met with the general approval of the townsfolk themselves. Franklin's claim that two thousand pounds would be raised by voluntary subscriptions they regarded as highly extravagant. This was cue enough for his quick wit. A bill was introduced by him into the General Assembly providing that, when the private contributors had organized under the charter granted by it, and had raised two thousand pounds by voluntary subscription, for the free maintenance of the sick poor in the hospital, then the Speaker, upon that fact being certified to his satisfaction, should draw his warrant on the Treasurer of the Province for the payment of two thousand pounds, in two yearly payments, to the treasurer of the hospital, to be applied to its establishment. With the lubricant supplied by this timely condition, the bill slid smoothly down all the legislative grooves. Even the sincerest support of a good legislative measure is not more ardent to all appearances than the specious support sometimes given to such a measure by a member of the Legislature who is opposed to it but sees, or thinks he sees, that it will never become a law, even though he should vote for it. The opponents of Franklin's bill, conceiving that they had a chance to acquire the credit of generosity without paying the pecuniary penalty, agreed to its enactment, and, on the other hand, the condition, by affording to private subscribers the prospect of having their contributions practically doubled from the public purse, furnished them with an additional motive to give.

The private contributions even exceeded the sum fixed by the condition, and the credit with which the legislative adversaries of the bill had to content themselves was not that of deceitful but of real bounty. "I do not remember any of my political manœuvres," Franklin complacently declares in the *Autobiography*, "the success of which gave me at the time more pleasure, or wherein, after thinking of it, I more easily excus'd myself for having made some use of cunning." We experience no difficulty in condoning this cunning when we realize that its fruit was the Pennsylvania Hospital, which, after many years of rare usefulness, is still one of the chief institutions of Philadelphia. It is gratifying to feel that its history has not been unworthy of the admirable inscription which Franklin wrote for its corner-stone:

> In the year of Christ MDCCLV, George the Second happily reigning (for he sought the happiness of his people), Philadelphia flourishing (for its inhabitants were public spirited), this building, by the bounty of the government, and of many private persons, was piously founded for the relief of the sick and miserable. May the God of Mercies bless the undertaking.

The Reverend Gilbert Tennent, one of whose sermons caused Whitefield to say, "Never before heard I such a searching sermon; he is a son of thunder, and does not regard the face of man," was not so fortunate as Dr. Bond when he asked Franklin to assist him in obtaining subscriptions for the erection of a new meeting-house in Philadelphia, for the use of a congregation drawn from among the Presbyterians, who were originally disciples of Whitefield. Franklin says that he absolutely refused to do so because he was unwilling to make himself disagreeable to his fellow-citizens by soliciting contributions from them too frequently. The truth in part, we suspect, was that his zealous interest was not easily excited in any meeting-house where even a missionary sent by the Mufti

of Constantinople to preach Mohammedanism to the people of Philadelphia would not find a pulpit at his service. But, if this incident has any general significance, it may be accepted as evidence that, though Franklin might contribute nothing else upon such an occasion, he was prepared to contribute a good joke. When Tennent found that he could get no other kind of assistance from him, he asked him to give him at least his advice. What followed would suffer in telling if not told as the *Autobiography* tells it:

> That I will readily do [said Franklin], and, in the first place, I advise you to apply to all those whom you know will give something; next, to those whom you are uncertain whether they will give anything or not, and show them the list of those who have given; and, lastly, do not neglect those who you are sure will give nothing, for in some of them you may be mistaken. He laugh'd and thank'd me, and said he would take my advice. He did so, for he ask'd of *everybody*, and he obtain'd a much larger sum than he expected, with which he erected the capacious and very elegant meeting-house that stands in Arch Street.

Other services rendered by Franklin to Philadelphia related to the better paving and lighting of its streets. These streets were laid out with great regularity, but, being wholly unpaved, were mere quagmires in winter and stifling stretches of dust in summer. So bad was their condition as a rule that Philadelphia came to be known among the country people around it as "Filthy-dirty." Franklin, when he lived near the Jersey Market, witnessed with concern the miserable plight of its patrons as they waded about on either side of it in mire deep enough to have prompted the observation of Napoleon, based upon his campaigns in Poland, that mud should be accounted a fifth element. A step was taken when a stretch of ground down the middle of the market was paved with brick.

This offered a firm footing, when once attained, but, before a pedestrian could attain it, he might be overshoes in wet clay. By tongue and pen, Franklin at length succeeded in having the spaces between the market and the foot pavements of the streets flanking it laid with stone. The result was that for a season a market woman could reach the market dry-shod, but, in the course of time, the pavements became loaded with mud shaken off the wheels of passing vehicles, and this mud, after being thus deposited, was allowed, for lack of street cleaners, to remain where it fell. Here was an inviting situation, indeed, for such a municipal housewife as Franklin. Having hunted up a poor, industrious man, who was willing to contract for the sum of sixpence per month, per house, to sweep up and carry away the dirt in front of the houses abutting on these pavements, he wrote and published a paper setting forth the marked advantages to the neighborhood that would result from such a small expenditure—the reduced amount of mud that people would carry around on their shoes, the readier access that customers would have to the shops near the market, freedom from wind-borne dust and other kindred benefits not likely to escape the attention of a man to whom even the dust of unpaved streets suggested the following reflections in the *Autobiography:*

Human felicity is produc'd not so much by great pieces of good fortune that seldom happen, as by little advantages that occur every day. Thus, if you teach a poor young man to shave himself, and keep his razor in order, you may contribute more to the happiness of his life than in giving him a thousand guineas. The money may be soon spent, the regret only remaining of having foolishly consumed it; but in the other case, he escapes the frequent vexation of waiting for barbers, and of their sometimes dirty fingers, offensive breaths, and dull razors; he shaves when most convenient to him, and

enjoys daily the pleasure of its being done with a good instrument.

A copy of the paper was sent to each house affected by its proposals, every householder agreed to pay his sixpence, and the sense of comfort experienced by the entire population of Philadelphia in the more commodious use of the market prepared their minds for the bill which Franklin later introduced into the Assembly providing for the paving of the whole city. He was on the point of embarking on his second voyage to England when this was done, and the bill was not passed until after he was gone, and then with an alteration in his method of assessing the paving cost which his judgment did not deem an improvement; but the bill as passed contained a further provision for lighting as well as paving the streets of Philadelphia which he did deem a great improvement. The merit of first suggesting the hospital Franklin is studious to tell us, though ascribed to him, was due to Dr. Bond. So likewise he is quick to admit that the honor of giving the first impulse to municipal lighting in Philadelphia did not belong to him, as had been supposed, but to John Clifton, who had placed a private lamp at his own door. Franklin simply followed Clifton's example; but, when the city began to light its streets, his fertile mind did bring forward a novel idea which proved a highly useful one. Instead of the globes imported from London which became so black and opaque from smoke for lack of air, when the lamps were lighted, that they had to be cleaned every day, and which, moreover, were totally wrecked by a single blow, he suggested that the coverings for the city lamps should be composed of four flat panes, with a long funnel above and inlets below for the free circulation of air. The result was a covering that remained untarnished until morning and was not involved in complete ruin by a single fracture.

Such were some of the principal achievements of Franklin for the benefit of Philadelphia. It is not easy to magnify unduly their significance when we bear in mind that they were all crowded into a period of some thirty years during the greater part of which he was faithfully heeding Poor Richard's maxim, "Keep thy shop and thy shop will keep thee"; to say nothing of the claims upon his time of political duties and scientific studies and experiments. Franklin was not the Romulus of Philadelphia; nor was he its Augustus, who found it of brick and left it of marble. There was solid brick enough in the structure of American colonial life, but little marble. However, it can at least be said of him that rarely has any single private individual, with no great fortune, and with no control over the public purse except what is conferred by the favor of public opinion won by personal intelligence and public spirit, laid the foundations of so much that was of lasting and increasing utility to an infant community destined to become one of the populous and opulent cities of the world. In how many other respects his sympathy with human interests in their broader relations made its influence felt in Colonial America we can only conjecture, but in many ways, in addition to those already mentioned, its fructifying results have been brought home to us. It was at his instance that the merchants of Philadelphia sent the ship *Argo* to the Arctics to discover a Northwest Passage. Kalm, the Swedish botanist, when he came to Pennsylvania, found in him a most helpful friend and patron. He labored untiringly to obtain for Bartram, the American naturalist, the recognition which he richly merited. One of the proudest days of his life was when his eager exertions in behalf of silk culture in Pennsylvania were rewarded by the knowledge that the Queen of England had not only graciously condescended to accept a sample of Pennsylvania silk tendered to her by him but proposed

to wear it in the form of a dress. During his third sojourn in England, the hospital at home was frequently reminded of the strength of his concern for its welfare by gifts and suggestions more valuable than gifts. To him was entrusted the commission of purchasing a telescope and other instruments for the Astronomical School at Harvard College. To the library of Harvard he occasionally forwarded parcels of books, either his own gifts or gifts from his friends. In addition to his zealous efforts in the latter part of his life in behalf of negro emancipation and the relief of the free blacks, he was for several years one of the associates charged with the management of the Bray Fund for the conversion of negroes in the British plantations. He was also a trustee of the Society for the benefit of poor Germans, one of the objects of which was the establishment of English schools in the German communities which had become so numerous in Pennsylvania. It was high time that this object should receive the attention of the Englishry of the province as one of his letters indicates.

I remember [he said in 1753 in a letter to Richard Jackson] when they [the Germans] modestly declined intermeddling in our Elections, but now they come in Droves and carry all before them, except in one or two Counties.

Few of their Children in the Country learn English. They import many Books from Germany; and of the six Printing-Houses in the Province, two are entirely German, two half German half English, and but two entirely English. They have one German Newspaper, and one half-German. Advertisements, intended to be general, are now printed in Dutch and English. The Signs in our Streets have Inscriptions in both Languages, and in some places only German. They begin of late to make all their Bonds and other legal Instruments in their own Language, which (though I think it ought not to be) are allowed good in our Courts, where the German Business so increases, that there is continued need of Inter-

preters; and I suppose in a few Years they will also be necessary in the Assembly to tell one half of our Legislators what the other half say.[1]

As we are said to be indebted to Jefferson for the introduction into America of the Lombardy poplar so it is said that we are indebted to Franklin for the domestication of the yellow willow so useful in the manufacture of wickerwork. The story is that his observant eye noted the sprouts, which a willow basket from abroad had put forth, when refreshed by the water of a creek into which it had been tossed, and that he was at pains to plant some of them on a lot in Philadelphia. Apparently, he was the first person, too, to introduce the rhubarb plant into America. He obtained seed of the broom-corn on one of his visits to Virginia, and took care to disseminate it in Pennsylvania and other Colonies. When the Pennsylvania farmers were skeptical about the value of plaster, he framed in that substance on the surface of a conspicuous field the words: "THIS HAS BEEN PLASTERED," which were soon rewritten in vegetation that rose legibly above the general level of its surroundings. One of his suggestions was an "office of insurance" on the mutual assessment

[1] In an earlier letter to James Parker, Franklin commented on the "Dutch" immigration into Pennsylvania very much as a Californian was afterwards in the habit of doing on the Chinese immigration to our Pacific coast. The "Dutch" under-lived, and were thereby enabled, he said, "to under-work and under-sell the English." In his essay on *The Increase of Mankind*, he asked: "Why should the *Palatine Boors* be suffered to swarm into our Settlements, and, by herding together, establish their Language and Manners, to the Exclusion of ours?" Expressions in his letter to Jackson, which we do not mention in our text, make it manifest enough that he gravely doubted whether the German population of Pennsylvania could be relied upon to assist actively in the defence of the Province in the event of its being invaded by the French. However, after suggesting some means of improving the situation, he is compelled to conclude with these words: "I say, I am not against the Admission of Germans in general, for they have their Virtues. Their Industry and Frugality are exemplary. They are excellent Husbandmen; and contribute greatly to the Improvement of a Country."

plan against losses from storms, blights, insects, etc., suffered by farmers. Among his essays is a concise but highly instructive one on Maize, or Indian Corn, which was well calculated to make known to the world a plant now hardly less prized by the American for its general usefulness than the date-palm is by the Arab. John Adams informs us in his *Diary* that, on one occasion, when in Massachusetts, Franklin mentioned that Rhenish grape-vines had been recently planted at Philadelphia, and had succeeded very well, whereupon his host, Edmund Quincy, expressed the wish that he could plant some in his own garden. A few weeks later Quincy received a bundle of the Rhenish slips by sea from Franklin, and a little later another by post.

Thus [diarizes Adams, at the time a young man of but twenty-four, when the difficulty with which the slips had been procured by Franklin came to his knowledge] he took the trouble to hunt over the city (Philadelphia) and not finding vines there, he sends seventy miles into the country, and then sends one bundle by water, and, lest they should miscarry, another by land, to a gentleman whom he owed nothing, and was but little acquainted with, purely for the sake of doing good in the world by propagating the Rhenish vines through these provinces. And Mr. Quincy has some of them now growing in his garden. This is an instance, too, of his amazing capacity for business, his memory and resolution: amidst so much business as counselor, postmaster, printer, so many private studies, and so many public avocations too, to remember such a transient hint and exert himself so in answer to it, is surprising.

If Adams had only known Franklin better at the time when these words were penned, which was long before his analysis of Franklin's motives could be jaundiced by jealousy or wounded self-love, he might have added that this incident was also an illustration of that unfailing good-nature which made the friendship of Franklin an ever-

bubbling well-spring of kindly offices. "Accept my kind offices to thy other children as the only return in my power for thy continual favors to me," one of the petitions in the "little prayer," prefixed to Franklin's manual of self-discipline, expressed an aspiration which, in addition to more impressive forms of fulfilment, was realized many times over in the innumerable small offerings of good feeling that he was in the habit of laying from time to time upon the altar of friendship. In recounting the benefactions, which he bestowed upon his fellow-creatures by his public spirit and private benevolence, it is hard to refrain from speculating as to what he might have accomplished, if his wealth had only, like that of Andrew Carnegie, been commensurate with his wisdom and philanthropic zeal. Then, in truth, would have been united such agencies as have not often worked together for the amelioration of human society. But independent as Franklin was, according to the pecuniary standards of Colonial America, he was in no position to contribute money lavishly to any generous object. When he gave it, he had to give it in such a way as to make it keep itself going until it had gone far by its own mere cumulative energy. This is very interestingly brought out in a letter from him, when at Passy, to Benjamin Webb, a distressed correspondent, to whom he was sending a gift of ten louis d'ors.

I do not pretend [he said] to *give* such a Sum; I only *lend* it to you. When you shall return to your Country with a good Character, you cannot fail of getting into some Business, that will in time enable you to pay all your Debts. In that Case, when you meet with another honest Man in similar Distress, you must pay me by lending this Sum to him; enjoining him to discharge the Debt by a like operation, when he shall be able, and shall meet with such another opportunity. I hope it may thus go thro' many hands, before it meets with a Knave that will stop its Progress. This is a trick of mine for

doing a deal of good with a little money. I am not rich enough to afford *much* in good works, and so am obliged to be cunning and make the most of a *little*.

It is to be hoped that Webb was but the first link in the golden chain which this letter sought to fashion.

It is a remarkable fact that Franklin also endeavored to give even posthumous efficacy to this same idea of economizing pecuniary force. By a codicil to his will, he created two funds of one thousand pounds each, one for the benefit of the inhabitants of the town of Boston, and the other for the benefit of the inhabitants of the town of Philadelphia. The selectmen and the ministers of the oldest Episcopalian, Congregational and Presbyterian churches in Boston were to be the trustees for the management of the Boston fund, and the City Corporation was to manage the Philadelphia fund. The amounts were to be respectively lent in sums not exceeding sixty pounds sterling, nor less than fifteen pounds, for any one person, in the discretion of the respective managers, to such young married artificers, under the age of twenty-five years, as should have served an apprenticeship in the respective towns and have faithfully fulfilled the duties stipulated for in their indentures, upon their producing certificates to their good moral character from at least two respectable citizens, and bonds executed by themselves and these citizens, as sureties, for the repayment of the loans in ten equal annual instalments, with interest at the rate of five per cent. per annum. If there were more applicants than money, the proportions, in which the sums would otherwise have been allotted, were to be ratably diminished in such a way that some assistance would be given to every applicant. As fast as the sums lent were repaid, they were again to be lent out to fresh borrowers. If the plan was faithfully carried out for one hundred years, the fond projector calculated that, at the

end of that time, the Boston, as well as the Philadelphia, fund, would amount to one hundred and thirty-one thousand pounds, of which he would have the managers of the Boston fund lay out in their discretion one hundred thousand pounds in public improvements; the remaining thirty-one thousand pounds to be lent out as the original one thousand pounds was for another hundred years. At the end of the second term, Franklin calculated that, mishaps aside, the sum would be four million and sixty-one thousand pounds sterling, of which he bequeathed one million sixty-one thousand pounds to the inhabitants of Boston absolutely, and three million pounds to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts absolutely; not presuming, he said, to carry his views further. At the end of the first one hundred years, if the purpose was not already executed, the City Corporation was to use a part of the fund accumulated for the benefit of the inhabitants of Philadelphia in piping the water of Wissahickon Creek into that city, and the testator also recommended that the Schuylkill should be made completely navigable. In other respects the conditions of the two gifts were the same. An English lawyer characterized the famous will by which Peter Thellusson tried to circumvent the legal rule against perpetuities as "posthumous avarice." If Franklin, too, kept his hand clenched after he left the world, it was not in the vainglory of family pride nor from the mere sordid, uncalculating love of treasured wealth, but only that he might open it as "bounty's instrument," when overflowingly full, for the purpose of conferring upon men a far richer largess of beneficence than it had been capable of conferring in life. Changes in industrial conditions defeated his intentions with respect to artificers, and the Philadelphia fund proved far less crescive than the Boston one, but both have proved enough so to illustrate the procreative quality of money upon which Franklin was so fond of dilating. The Boston fund,

including the sum applied at the end of the first one hundred years to the use of Franklin Union, amounted on January 1, 1913, to $546,811.39, and the Philadelphia fund, including the amount applied to the use of Franklin Institute, amounted on January 1, 1913, to $186,807.06. Poor Richard certainly selected a most effective way this time for renewing the reminder with which he ended his *Hints for those that would be Rich.*

"A Penny sav'd is Twopence clear
A Pin a Day is a groat a year."

With the expanding horizon, which came to Franklin in 1757, when he was drawn off into the world-currents of his time, came also larger opportunities for promoting the welfare of the race. There was a double reason why he should not be tardy in availing himself of these opportunities. He was both by nature and training at once a philosopher and a philanthropist. "God grant," he fervently exclaimed in a letter to David Hartley in 1789, "that not only the Love of Liberty, but a thorough Knowledge of the Rights of Man, may pervade all the Nations of the Earth, so that a Philosopher may set his Foot anywhere on its Surface, and say 'This is my country.'" To Joseph Huey he wrote in the letter, from which we have already freely quoted, that the only thanks he desired for a kindness which he had shown the former was that he should always be equally ready to serve any other person who might need his assistance, and so let good offices go round; "for Mankind," Franklin added, "are all of a Family." During his third sojourn in England, he entered earnestly into a scheme for supplying the islands of Acpy-nomawée and Tovy-poennammoo, "called in the maps New Zealand," which contained no useful quadrupeds but dogs, with fowls, hogs, goats, cattle, corn, iron and other commodities of civilized life. The portion

of the appeal for pecuniary aid for this purpose, which was borrowed from his pen, after beginning with the statement that Britain itself was said to have originally produced nothing but sloes, adapts itself, as all his writings of this kind usually did, to both the unselfish and selfish instincts of his readers. It was the obligation, he insisted, of those, who thought it their duty to ask bread and other blessings daily from Heaven, to show their gratitude to their great Benefactor by the only means in their power, and that was by promoting the happiness of his other children. *Communiter bona profundere* Deûm est. And then trade always throve better when carried on with a people possessed of the arts and conveniences of life than with naked savages.

As events moved along apace, and Franklin found himself in a world, once again ravaged and ensanguined by war, the triple birth of human folly, greed and atrocity, his heart, irrevocably enlisted as it was in the American cause, went out into one generous effort after another to establish at least a few peaceful sanctuaries where the nobler impulses and aims of human nature might be safe from the destructive rage of its malignant passions. In 1779, when our Minister to France, he issued instructions to the captains of all armed ships holding commissions from Congress not to molest, in any manner, the famous English navigator, Captain Cook, on his return from the voyage of discovery into unknown seas upon which he had been dispatched before the Revolutionary War. This act was handsomely acknowledged by the British Government. One of the gold medals, struck in honor of Captain Cook, was presented to Franklin by the hand of Sir Joseph Banks, the President of the Royal Society, and the British Admiralty Board also sent him a copy of the Captain's book, with its "elegant collection of plates," and a very polite letter from Lord Howe stating that the gift was made with the express approval of the King. In

the same year similar instructions were given by Franklin for the protection of the vessel that was that year to transport the supplies which were annually conveyed from Europe to the Moravian Mission on the coast of Labrador. And later the same ægis was likewise extended over the ship which was expected to bear provisions and clothing from the charitable citizens of Dublin for the relief of suffering in the West Indies. Of the rule that "free ships shall make free goods," Franklin said in a letter to J. Torris, an agent for American cruisers at Dunkirk, "This rule is itself so reasonable, and of a nature to be so beneficial to mankind, that I cannot but wish it may become general." Nor did he stop there. In this letter, such was his confidence that Congress would approve the new rule that he notified Torris that, until he had received its orders on the subject, he should condemn no more English goods found by American cruisers in Dutch vessels, unless contraband of war. How unqualifiedly he was disposed to recognize the neutrality of all such goods is evidenced by other letters of his, too, written when he was in France. But to him also belongs the peculiar glory of insisting that non-combatants should be exempt from the lamentable penalties of war.

I approve much [he said in a letter in 1780 to Charles W. F. Dumas] of the Principles of the Confederacy of the Neutral Powers, and am not only for respecting the Ships as the House of a Friend, tho' containing the Goods of an Enemy, but I even wish for the sake of humanity that the Law of Nations may be further improv'd, by determining, that, even in time of War, all those kinds of People, who are employ'd in procuring subsistence for the Species, or in exchanging the Necessaries or Conveniences of Life, which are for the common Benefit of Mankind, such as Husbandmen on their lands, fishermen in their Barques, and traders in unarm'd Vessels, shall be permitted to prosecute their several innocent and useful Employments without interruption or Molestation,

and nothing taken from them, even when wanted by an Enemy, but on paying a fair Price for the same.

This principle, as well as a stipulation against privateering, was actually made a part of the treaty of amity and commerce between Prussia and the United States, which was signed shortly before Franklin returned to America from the French Mission, and it was not for the lack of effort on his part that similar articles were not inserted in all the treaties between the United States and other European countries that were entered into about the same time.

For the practice of privateering he cherished a feeling of intense abhorrence. It behoved merchants, he wrote to Benjamin Vaughan, "to consider well of the justice of a War, before they voluntarily engage a Gang of Ruffians to attack their Fellow Merchants of a neighbouring Nation, to plunder them of their Property, and perhaps ruin them and their Families, if they yield it; or to wound, maim, or murder them, if they endeavour to defend it. Yet these Things are done by Christian Merchants, whether a War be just or unjust; and it can hardly be just on both sides. They are done by English and American Merchants, who, nevertheless, complain of private Thefts, and hang by Dozens the Thieves they have taught by their own Example." Rarely have the injurious results of privateering been presented with more force than they were by Franklin in his *Propositions Relative to Privateering*, sent to Richard Oswald—the industrial loss involved in the withdrawal of so many men from honest labor, "who, besides, spend what they get in riot, drunkenness, and debauchery, lose their habits of industry, are rarely fit for any sober business after a peace, and serve only to increase the number of highwaymen and housebreakers"; and the pecuniary ruin into which their employers are drawn by inability, after the

enjoyment of rapidly acquired wealth, to adjust the habits formed by it to normal conditions. "A just punishment," Franklin adds, "for their having wantonly and unfeelingly ruined many honest, innocent traders and their families, whose subsistence was employed in serving the common interests of mankind." And after all, he further said, as in the case of other lotteries, while a few of the adventurers secured prizes, the mass, for reasons that he stated very clearly, were losers.

We have already seen how strongly his mind leaned in the direction of arbitration as the proper method for settling international differences.

But a grave error it would be to think of Franklin as merely a wise, placid, humane Quaker, or as simply a benignant, somewhat visionary Friend of Man. He knew what the world ought to be, and might be made to be, but he also knew what the world was, and was likely for some time to be. He resembled the Quaker in his shrewd capacity to take care of himself, in his love of thrift and of all that appertains to the rational and useful side of life, and especially in his broad, unreserved, human sympathies. It was for this reason that, though not a Quaker himself, he could usually count with more or less certainty upon the support of Quakers in his public undertakings and political struggles. But rigid, dogged scruples like those which made an effort in Franklin's time to coerce a Pennsylvania Quaker into taking up arms as impotent, as a rule, as blows upon an unresisting punch-bag were wholly out of keeping with such a character as Franklin's. For all that was best in the enthusiastic philanthropy of the French, too, he had no little affinity, but what Lecky has called his "pedestrian intellect" saved him from inane dreams of patriarchal innocence and simplicity in a world from which Roland was to hurry himself because it was too polluted with crime.

It was a good story that Franklin's Quaker friend,

James Logan, told of William Penn. He was coming over to Pennsylvania as the Secretary of Penn, when their ship was chased by an armed vessel. Their captain made ready for an engagement, but said to Penn that he did not expect his aid or that of his Quaker companions, and that they might retire to the cabin, which they all did except Logan, who remained on deck, and was quartered to a gun. The supposed enemy proved to be a friend, and, when this fact was announced by Logan to Penn and the other refugees below, Penn rebuked him for violating the Quaker principle of non-resistance. Nettled by being reproved before so many persons, Logan replied, "*I being thy servant, why did thee not order me to come down? But thee was willing enough that I should stay and help to fight the ship when thee thought there was danger.*" Franklin abhorred the Medusa locks of war, and loved the fair, smiling face of peace as much as any Quaker, but, when there was peril to be braved, he could always be relied upon to incur his share.

Both in point of physique and manliness of spirit he was well fitted for leadership and conflict. Josiah, the father of Franklin, we are told in the *Autobiography*, had "an excellent constitution of body, was of middle stature, but well set, and very strong." The description was true to Franklin himself. He is supposed to have been about five feet and ten inches high, was robustly built, and, when a printer at Watts' printing house in London, could carry up and down stairs in each hand a large form of types which one of his fellow printers could carry only with both hands. In his boyhood he was as eager as most healthy-minded boys are to go off to sea; but his father already had one runagate son, Josiah the younger, at sea, and had no mind to have another. However, living as he did near the water, Benjamin was much in and about it, and learnt early to swim well and to manage boats.

When in a boat or canoe with other boys [he says in the *Autobiography*], I was commonly allowed to govern, especially in any case of difficulty; and upon other occasions I was generally a leader among the boys, and sometimes led them into scrapes, of which I will mention one instance, as it shows an early projecting public spirit, tho' not then justly conducted.

He then tells us how, under his direction, a band of his comrades, late in the afternoon, when no one was about, "like so many emmets," abstracted all the stones collected for the foundation of a new building and constructed with them a wharf on a quagmire for the convenience of the marauders when fishing. The authors of the mischief were discovered. "Several of us," says Franklin, "were corrected by our fathers; and, though I pleaded the usefulness of the work, mine convinced me that nothing was useful which was not honest."[1]

Another incident in Franklin's youth, indicative of the way in which leadership was apt to be conceded in moments of perplexity to his hardihood, is narrated in the journal of his first voyage from England to America, and arose when he and two companions, after wandering about the Isle of Wight until dark, were anxiously endeavoring to make their way back across an intercepting creek to their ship, the *Berkshire*, which was only awaiting the first favoring breeze to be up and away. On this occasion, he stripped to his shirt, and waded through the waters of the creek, and at one time, through mud as well up to his middle, to a boat staked nearly fifty yards offshore;

[1] Another sidelight upon the character of Franklin in his boyhood is found in connection with the caution in regard to England that he gave to Robert Morris in 1782, when the Revolutionary War was coming to an end. "That nation," he said, "is changeable. And though somewhat humbled at present, a little success may make them as insolent as ever. I remember that, when I was a boxing boy, it was allowed, even after an adversary said he had enough, to give him a rising blow. Let ours be a douser."

the wind all the while blowing very cold and very hard. When he reached the boat, it was only to find after an hour's exertions that he could not release it from its fastenings, and that there was nothing for him to do but to return as he came. Then, just as the unlucky trio were thinking of looking up some haystack in which to spend the night, one of them remembered that he had a horse-shoe in his pocket. Again the indomitable Franklin waded back to the boat, and this time, by wrenching out with the shoe the staple by which it was chained to the stake, secured it, and brought it ashore to his friends. On its way to the other shore, it grounded in shoal water, and stuck so fast that one of its oars was broken in an effort to get it off. After striving and struggling for half an hour and more, the party gave up and sat down with their hands before them in despair. It looked as if after being exposed all night to wind and weather, which was bad, they would be exposed the next morning to the taunts of the owner of the boat and the amusement of the whole town of Yarmouth; which was worse. However, when their plight seemed utterly hopeless, a happy thought occurred to them, and Franklin and one of his companions, having got out into the creek and thus lightened the craft, contrived to draw it into deeper water.

Still another incident brings into clear relief the resolute will of the youthful Franklin. It is told in the *Autobiography*. He was in a boat on the Delaware with his free-thinking and deep-drinking friend, Collins, who had acquired the habit of "sotting with brandy," and some other young men. Collins was in the state pictured by one or more of the cant phrases descriptive of an inebriate condition which were compiled with such painstaking thoroughness by Franklin in his "Drinker's Dictionary" for the *Pennsylvania Gazette*. It became Collins' turn to row, but he refused to do it. "I will be row'd home," said Collins. "We will not row you," said Franklin.

"You must, or stay all night on the water just as you please," said Collins. The others said: "Let us row; what signifies it?" But Franklin's mind was soured by Collins' past misconduct, and he refused to do so. Thereupon Collins swore that he would make him row or throw him overboard, and advanced towards him and struck at him. As he did so, Franklin clapped his hand under Collins' crotch, and, rising, pitched him headforemost into the river. Knowing that Collins was a good swimmer, he felt little concern about him; so the boat was rowed a short distance from Collins, and with a few timely strokes removed slightly out of his reach whenever he attempted to board it; he being asked each time whether he would consent to row.

He was ready to die with vexation [says Franklin], and obstinately would not promise to row. However, seeing him at last beginning to tire, we lifted him in and brought him home dripping wet in the evening. We hardly exchang'd a civil word afterwards, and a West India captain, who had a commission to procure a tutor for the sons of a gentleman at Barbadoes, happening to meet with him, agreed to carry him thither. He left me then, promising to remit me the first money he should receive in order to discharge the debt; but I never heard of him after.

The debt was for money that Franklin had lent to Collins, when in straits produced by his dissipated habits, out of the vexatious sum collected by Franklin for Mr. Vernon, which cost him so much self-reproach until remitted to that gentleman.

The firmness exhibited by Franklin on this occasion he never failed to exhibit in his later life whenever it was necessary for him to do so. Even John Adams, in 1778, though he had worked himself up to the point of charging Franklin with downright indolence and with the "constant policy never to say 'yes' or 'no' decidedly but when he

could not avoid it," admitted in the same breath that Franklin had "as determined a soul as any man." If anyone doubts it, let him read the letters written by Franklin upon the rare occasions when he felt that, as a matter of justice or sober self-respect, he could not escape the duty of holding up the mirror of candid speech to the face of misconduct. On these occasions, his rebuke was like a bitter draught administered in a measuring glass, not a drop too much, not a drop too little. Witness his letter of March 12, 1780, to Captain Peter Landais in reply to the demand of that captain that he should be again placed in command of the *Alliance*.

The demand, however [Franklin wrote], may perhaps be made chiefly for the sake of obtaining a Refusal, of which you seem the more earnestly desirous as the having it to produce may be of service to you in America. I will not therefore deny it to you, and it shall be as positive and clear as you require it. No one has ever learnt from me the Opinion I formed of you from the Enquiry made into your conduct. I kept it entirely to myself. I have not even hinted it in my Letters to America, because I would not hazard giving to any one a Bias to your Prejudice. By communicating a Part of that Opinion privately to you it can do you no harm for you may burn it. I should not give you the pain of reading it if your Demand did not make it necessary. I think you, then, so imprudent, so litigious and quarrelsome a man, even with your best friends, that Peace and good order and, consequently, the quiet and regular Subordination so necessary to Success, are, where you preside, impossible. These are matters within my observation and comprehension, your military Operations I leave to more capable Judges. If therefore I had 20 Ships of War in my Disposition, I should not give one of them to Captain Landais.

All the higher forms of intellectual or moral power suggest the idea of reserve force, and of nothing is this truer than the self-controlled indignation of a really strong man like Franklin or Washington.

What Franklin did for Philadelphia, when peace prevailed, we have already seen; what he did for it, when threatened by war, remains to be told. In 1747, England was involved in a struggle with France and Spain, and the city lay at the mercy of French and Spanish privateers, all the efforts of Governor Thomas to induce the Quaker majority in the Assembly to pass a militia law and to make other provision for the security of the Province having proved wholly futile. Under these circumstances, Franklin wrote and published a pamphlet, entitled *Plain Truth*, for the purpose of arousing the people of the Province to a true sense of their perilous predicament.

The pamphlet [Franklin tells us in the *Autobiography*], had a sudden and surprising effect, and we can readily believe it, for rarely has an alarum been more artfully sounded. In its pages is to be found every artifice of persuasion that could be skillfully used by an adroit pamphleteer for the purpose of playing upon the fears of his readers and inciting them to determined measures of self-defense. It began by pointing out the causes which had brought about an entire change in the former happy situation of the Province, namely its increased wealth, its defenseless condition, the familiarity acquired by its enemies with its Bay and River through prisoners, bearers of flags of truce, spies, and, perhaps, traitors, the ease with which pilots could be employed by these enemies and the known absence of ships of war, during the greatest part of the year, ever since the war began, from both Virginia and New York. That the enemies of the Province might even then have some of their spies in the Province could not be seriously doubted, it declared, for to maintain such spies had been the practice of all nations in all ages, as for example the five men sent by the Children of Dan to spy out the land of the Zidonians, and search it. (Book of Judges, Chap. XVIII, V. 2). These men, while engaged in their enterprise, met with a certain idolatrous priest of their own persuasion (would to God no such priests were to be found among the Pennsylvanians!)

And, when they questioned him as to whether their way would be prosperous, he among other things said unto them, *Go in Peace; before the Lord is your Way wherein you go.* (It was well known that there were many priests in the Province of the same religion as those who, of late, encouraged the French to invade the mother country). *And they came,* (Verse 7) *to Laish, and saw the People that were therein, how they dwelt CARELESS, after the Manner of the Zidonians,* QUIET AND SECURE. They *thought* themselves secure no doubt; and, as they *never had been* disturbed, vainly imagined they *never should.* It was not unlikely that some saw the danger they were exposed to by living in that careless manner; but it was not unlikely, too, that if these publicly expressed their apprehensions, the rest reproached them as timorous persons, wanting courage or confidence in their Gods, who (they perhaps said) had hitherto protected them. But the spies (Verse 8) returned, and among other things said to their countrymen (Verse 9), *Arise that we may go up against them; for we have seen the Land and behold it is very good! When ye go, ye shall come unto a People SECURE* (that is a people that apprehend no danger, and therefore have made no provision against it; great encouragement this), *and to a large Land, and a Place where there is no Want of any Thing.* What could they desire more? Accordingly we find, continued *Plain Truth,* in the succeeding verses that *six hundred Men* only, *appointed with Weapons of War,* undertook the conquest of this *large Land;* knowing that 600 men, armed and disciplined, would be an overmatch, perhaps, for 60,000 unarmed, undisciplined, and off their guard. And when they went against it, the idolatrous priest (Verse 17) *with his graven Image, and his Ephod, and his Teraphim, and his molten Image* (plenty of superstitious trinkets) joined with them, and, no doubt, gave them all the intelligence and assistance in his power; his heart, as the text assures us, *being glad,* perhaps, for reasons more than one. And now what was the fate of poor Laish? The 600 men, being arrived, found, as the spies had reported, a people QUIET and SECURE. (Verses 20, 21). *And they smote them with the Edge of the Sword, and burnt the City with* FIRE; *and there was no* DELIVERER, *because it was far from Zidon*—not so far from *Zidon,* however, as *Pennsylvania* was

from *Britain;* and yet we are, said *Plain Truth*, more careless than the people of *Laish!*

Having awakened in this clever fashion the slumbering strings of sectarian hatred and religious association, the author of *Plain Truth* brings the same sure and compelling touch to the other points of his theme: the danger that the Iroquois might, from considerations set forth in the pamphlet with telling force, be wholly gained over by the French; which meant deserted plantations, ruin, bloodshed and confusion; the folly and selfishness of the view that Rural Pennsylvania and the City of Philadelphia did not owe each other mutual obligations of assistance; the ruin in which commerce, trade and industry were certain to be involved by the occlusion of the Delaware; the probability that the enemy, finding that he could come higher and higher up the river, seize vessels, land and plunder plantations and villages, and return with his booty unmolested, might finally be led to believe that all Pennsylvanians were Quakers, against all defence, from a principle of conscience, and thus be induced to strike one bold stroke for the city and for the whole plunder of the river.

Then, after dispatching with a few practical observations the fallacy that the expense of a vessel to guard the trade of the Province would be greater than any loss that the enemy could inflict upon the Province at sea, and that it would be cheaper for the Government to open an insurance office and to pay every such loss, the pamphlet presents a harrowing description of the fate that would befall Philadelphia if it passed into the hands of the enemy. It is all limned with the minuteness of a Dutch painting; the confusion and disorder; the outcries and lamentations; the stream of outgoing fugitives (including citizens reputed to be rich and fearful of the torture), hurrying away with their effects; the wives and children hanging upon the

necks of their husbands and fathers and imploring them to be gone; the helplessness of the few that would remain; the sack; the conflagration. But what, asked *Plain Truth*, would the condition of the Philadelphians be, if suddenly surprised without previous alarm, perhaps in the night? Confined to their houses, they would have nothing to trust to but the enemy's mercy. Their best fortune would be to fall under the power of commanders of King's ships, able to control the mariners; and not into the hands of licentious privateers. Who could without the utmost horror conceive the miseries of the latter, when their persons, fortunes, wives and daughters would be subject to the wanton and unbridled rage, rapine and lust of negroes, mulattoes and others, the vilest and most abandoned of mankind? And then in a timely marginal note *Plain Truth* tells how poor Captain Brown, for bravely defending himself and his vessel longer than the ragged crew of a Spanish privateer expected, was barbarously stabbed and murdered, though on his knees begging quarter!

It would not be so bad for the rich, said *Plain Truth*. The means of speedy flight were ready to their hands, and they could lay by money and effects in distant and safe places against the evil day. It was by the middling people, the tradesmen, shopkeepers and farmers of the Province and city that the brunt would have to be borne. They could not all fly with their families, and, if they could, how would they subsist? Upon them too the weight of the contributions exacted by the enemy (as was true of ordinary taxes) would rest. Though numerous, this class was quite defenceless as it had neither forts, arms, union nor discipline, and yet on whom could it fix its eyes with the least expectation that they would do anything for its security? Not on that wealthy and powerful body of people, the Quakers, who had ever since the war controlled the elections of the Province and filled

almost every seat in the Assembly. Should the Quakers be conjured by all the ties of neighborhood, friendship, justice and humanity to consider the obligations that they owed to a very great part of the people who could have no confidence that God would protect those that neglected the use of rational means for protecting themselves, and the distraction, misery and confusion, desolation and distress which might possibly be the effect of their unreasonable predominancy and perseverance, yet all would be in vain; for the Quakers had already been by great numbers of the people petitioned in vain. The late Governor of the Province did for years solicit, request and even threaten them in vain. The council had twice remonstrated with them in vain. Their religious prepossessions were unchangeable, their obstinacy invincible.

The manner in which Franklin makes his strictures on the Quakers in this pamphlet keen enough to shame them into letting the other elements of the population of the Province have the use of enough of the public money to enable them to protect both themselves and the Quakers and yet not keen enough to make the Quakers thoroughly incensed as well as obstinate is one of the notable features of *Plain Truth.*

The prospect of the middling people of the Province, the pamphlet continues, was no better, if they turned their eyes to those great and rich men, merchants and others, who were ever railing at the Quakers, but took no one step themselves for the public safety. With their wealth and influence, they might easily promote military ardor and discipline in the Province and effect everything under God for its protection. But envy seemed to have taken possession of their hearts, and to have eaten out and destroyed every generous, noble, public-spirited sentiment, and rage at the disappointment of their little schemes for power gnawed their souls, and filled them with such cordial hatred to their opponents that any proposal, by

the execution of which the latter might receive benefit as well as themselves, was rejected with indignation.

However, if the city and Province were brought to destruction, it would not be for want of numerous inhabitants able to bear arms in their defence. It was computed that the Province had at least (exclusive of the Quakers) 60,000 fighting men, acquainted with firearms, many of them hunters and marksmen, hardy and bold. All they lacked was order, discipline and a few cannon. At present they were like the separate filaments of flax before the thread is formed, without strength because without connection; but union would make them strong and even formidable. Many of the inhabitants of the Province were of the British race, and, though the fierce fighting animals of those happy islands were said to abate their natural fire and intrepidity, when removed to a foreign clime, yet, with their people this was not so. Among the inhabitants of the Province likewise were those brave men whose fathers in the last age made so glorious a stand for Protestanism and English liberty, when invaded by a powerful French Army, joined by Irish Catholics, under a bigoted Popish King; and also thousands of that warlike nation whose sons had ever since the time of Cæsar maintained the character he gave their fathers of uniting the most obstinate courage to all the other military virtues —the brave and steady Germans.

Poor Richard, of course, had to have his proverb in war as well as peace. Were the union formed, and the fighting men of the Province once united, thoroughly armed and disciplined, the very fame of strength and readiness, *Plain Truth* thought, would be a means of discouraging the enemy, "for," said Franklin, "'tis a wise and true Saying, that *One Sword often keeps another in the Scabbard.* The Way to secure Peace is to be prepared for War."

After these weighty maxims, this remarkable pamphlet ends with the statement that, if its hints were so happy

as to meet with a suitable disposition of mind from the countrymen and fellow citizens of the writer, he would, in a few days, lay before them a form of association for the purposes mentioned in the pamphlet, together with a practical scheme for raising the money necessary for the crisis without laying a burthen on any man.

Like

"The drum,
That makes the warrior's stomach come,"

was *Plain Truth* with its sudden and surprising effect. Agreeably with the popular response to it, Franklin drafted articles of association, after consulting with others, and issued a call for a citizen's rally in the Whitefield meeting-house. When the citizens assembled, printed copies of the articles had already been struck off, and pens and ink had been distributed throughout the hall. Franklin then harangued the gathering a little, read and explained the articles, and handed around the printed copies. They were so eagerly signed that, when the meeting broke up, there were more than twelve hundred signatures, and this number, when the country people were subsequently given an opportunity to sign, swelled to more than ten thousand. All the signers furnished themselves as soon as they could with arms, organized into companies and regiments, chose their own officers, and met every week for military training. The contagion spread even to the women, and, with money raised by their own subscriptions, they procured silk colors for the companies, set off with devices and mottoes furnished by Franklin himself, who had a peculiar turn for designing things of that sort. The next step was for the officers of the companies, constituting the Philadelphia regiment, to meet and choose a colonel. They did so, and selected the only man, or almost the only man, so far as

we know, who has ever, in the history of the American Militia, conceived himself to be unfit for the office of colonel, and that is Benjamin Franklin. "Conceiving myself unfit," says Franklin in the *Autobiography*, "I declin'd that station, and recommended Mr. Lawrence, a fine person, and man of influence, who was accordingly appointed." But between building and equipping a battery on the river below Philadelphia, and manipulating Quaker scruples, Franklin had his hands quite as full as were those of Colonel Lawrence. At that time, whether the souls of men were to be saved by the erection of a church or their bodies to be destroyed by the erection of a battery, resort was had to a lottery. Franklin himself, for instance, was twice appointed by the vestry of Christ Church the manager of a lottery for the purpose of building a steeple and buying a chime of bells for that church. A lottery, therefore, was proposed by him to defray the expense of building and equipping the battery. The suggestion was eagerly acted upon, and, with the current of popular enthusiasm running so swiftly, the lottery soon filled, and a battery with merlons framed of logs and packed with earth was rapidly erected. The problem was how to get the necessary ordnance. Some old cannon were bought in Boston, a not over-sanguine request for some was made of the stingy Proprietaries, Richard and Thomas Penn, an order was given to other persons in England to purchase in case the request was not honored, and Colonel Lawrence, William Allen, Abram Taylor and Franklin were dispatched to New York by the association to borrow what cannon they could from Governor George Clinton. Fortunately for Pennsylvania, the cockles of that Governor's heart were of the kind that glow and expand with generous benevolence when warmed by the bottle. At first, he refused peremptorily to let the embassy have any cannon, but, later on when he sat at meat, or rather drink, with the members of his council,

there was, we are told by Franklin in the *Autobiography*, great drinking of Madeira wine, as the custom of New York then was. With the progress of the dinner, he softened by degrees, and said that he would lend six. After a few more bumpers, he advanced to ten, and, at length, he very good-naturedly conceded eighteen. They were fine cannon, eighteen-pounders, with their carriages, and were soon transported and mounted on the battery in Pennsylvania, where the associators kept a nightly guard while the war lasted; and where, among the rest, Franklin regularly took his turn of duty as a common soldier.

The activity of Franklin at this conjuncture not only won him a high degree of popularity with his fellow-citizens but also the good will of the Governor of Pennsylvania and his Council, who took him into their confidence, and consulted with him whenever it was felt that their concurrence was needed by the association. When they approved his suggestion that a fast should be proclaimed for the purpose of invoking the blessing of Heaven upon the association, and it was found that no such thing had ever been thought of in Pennsylvania before, he even fell back upon his New England training, and drew up a proclamation for the purpose in the usual form which was translated into German, printed in both English and German, and circulated throughout the Province. The fast day fixed by the paper gave the clergy of the different sects in Pennsylvania a favorable opportunity for urging the members of their flocks to enroll themselves as members of the association, and it was the belief of Franklin that, if peace had not soon been declared, all the religious congregations in the Province except those of the Quakers would have been enlisted in the movement for the defence of the Province.

The most interesting thing, however, connected with this whole episode was the conduct of the Quakers. James Logan, true to his former principles, wrote a cogent

address to his Fellow-Friends justifying defensive war, and placed sixty pounds in Franklin's hands with instructions to him to apply all the lottery prizes that they might win to the cost of the battery. Other Friends also, perhaps most of the younger ones, were in favor of defence, but many Friends preferred to keep up silently the semblance of conformity with their dogma about war, though ready enough to have it refined away by Franklin's astuteness, which had a gift for working around obstacles when it could not climb over or break through them. That the Quakers, as a body, even if they did not relish his new-born intimacy with the executive councillors, with whom they had had a feud of long standing, were not losing much of their placidity over the proposition to protect their throats and chattels against their will, an ambitious young gentleman, who wished to displace Franklin, as the Clerk of the Quaker Assembly, soon learnt. Like the generous Maori of New Zealand, who refrained from descending upon their English invaders until they had duly communicated to them the hour of their proposed onset, he advised Franklin (from good will he said) to resign as more consistent with his honor than being turned out. He little realized apparently that he was attempting to intimidate one of the grimmest antagonists that ever entertained the robuster American ideas about public office, the manner in which it is to be sought, and the prehensile tenacity, with which it is to be clung to, when secured. But for the fact that Franklin was always a highly faithful and efficient officeholder, and the further fact that he gave his entire salary, as President of Pennsylvania, to public objects, he would not fall far short of being a typical American officeholder of the better class, as that class was before the era of civil-service reform. On a later occasion, when his resignation as Deputy Postmaster-General for America was desired, he humorously observed in a letter to his sister, Jane, that he

was deficient in the Christian virtue of resignation. "If they would have my Office," he said, "they must take it." And, on another later occasion, he strongly advised his son not to resign his office, as Governor of New Jersey, because, while much might be made of a removal, nothing could be made of a resignation. As long as there was a son, or a grandson of his own, with no fear of the inclination of political competitors to pry into skeleton closets, or a relative of any sort to enjoy the sweets of public office, Franklin appears to have acted consistently upon the principle that the persons whose qualifications we know best, through the accident of family intimacy, are the persons that are likely to confer the highest degree of credit upon us when we appoint them to public positions.

With this general outlook upon the part of Franklin in regard to public office, the young man, who wished to be his successor, as clerk, soon found that there was nothing left for him to do except to go off sorrowfully like the young man in the Scriptures.

> My answer to him [says Franklin in the *Autobiography*] was, that I had read or heard of some public man who made it a rule never to ask for an office, and never to refuse one when offer'd to him. "I approve," says I, "of his rule, and will practice it with a small addition; I shall never *ask*, never *refuse*, nor ever *resign* an office. If they will have my office of clerk to dispose of to another, they shall take it from me. I will not, by giving it up, lose my right of some time or other making reprisals on my adversaries.

Franklin never actually refused an office except when its duties could be discharged only from what was virtually his death-bed, and he never resigned an office, though he was removed from one under circumstances which furnished a fine illustration, indeed, of how much can be made of a removal. On the other hand, he did not keep his vow of never asking for an office; for melancholy to

relate, like a raven eying a sick horse, we find him forehanded enough, when it was manifest that Mr. Elliot Benger, the Deputy Postmaster-General of America, was about to pay his last debt to nature, to apply for the reversion of his office before the debt was actually paid, and to offer, through Chief Justice Allen of Pennsylvania, the sum of three hundred pounds in perquisites and contingent fees and charges for it. Indeed, Benger, though "tho't to be near his end" by Franklin, when the latter first set to work to succeed him, did not die until more than two years afterwards.[1] As we shall see hereafter, to Franklin, as an officeholder, was honorably allotted even the state of supreme beatitude under the spoils system of politics which consists in holding more than one public office at one time.

The young aspirant for Franklin's place had nothing but his generous motives to soothe his disappointment, for at the next election Franklin was unanimously elected clerk as usual. Indeed, Franklin had reason to believe that the measures taken for the protection of Pennsylvania were not disagreeable to any of the Quakers, provided that they were not required to participate actively in

[1] Franklin certainly set an example on this occasion of the vigilant regard to the future which he afterwards enjoined in such a picturesque way upon Temple, when he was counselling the latter not to let the season of youth slip by him unimproved by diligence in his studies. "The Ancients," he said, "painted *Opportunity* as an old Man with Wings to his Feet & Shoulders, a great Lock of Hair on the forepart of his Head, but bald behind; whence comes our old saying, *Take Time by the Forelock;* as much as to say, when it is past, there is no means of pulling it back again; as there is no Lock behind to take hold of for that purpose." The advice of similar tenor in a somewhat later letter from Franklin to Temple has a touch of poetry about it. "If this Season is neglected," he said, "it will be like cutting off the Spring from the Year." So quick was the sympathy of Franklin always with youthful feelings and interests that he never grew too old for the application to him of Emerson's highly imaginative lines,

> "The old wine darkling in the cask,
> Feels the bloom on the living vine."

them. The proportion of Quakers sincerely opposed to resistance, he estimated, after having had a chance to look the field over, was as one to twenty-one only.

His long contact with the Assembly, as its clerk, had afforded him excellent opportunities for observing how embarrassed its Quaker majority, which loved political power quite as much as it detested war and Presbyterians, was, whenever applications were made to the Assembly for military grants by order of the Crown, and to what subtle shifts this majority was compelled to resort on such occasions to save its face; ending finally in its voting money simply for the "King's use," and never inquiring how it was spent. Sometimes the demand was not directly from the Crown, and then the conflict, that is being perpetually renewed between eccentric human opinions and the inexorable order of the universe, became acute, indeed, as, for instance, when this majority was urged by Governor Thomas to appropriate a sum of money with which to buy powder for the military needs of New England. Money to buy powder nakedly the Quakers were not willing to vote, but they appropriated three thousand pounds to be put into the hands of the Governor for the purchase of bread, flour, wheat or other *grain*. Some members of the Governor's Council, desirous of still further embarrassing the Assembly, advised him not to accept provisions instead of powder, but he replied: "I shall take the money, for I understand very well their meaning; other grain is gunpowder." Gunpowder he accordingly bought, and the Quakers maintained a silence as profound as that which lulled Franklin to sleep in their great meeting-house when he first arrived in Philadelphia. The esoteric meaning of this kind of language was, of course, not likely to be lost upon a man so prompt as Franklin to take a wink for a nod. With his practical turn of mind, he was the last person in the world to boggle over delphic words when they were clear enough for him

to see that they gave him all that he wanted. So, when it was doubtful whether the Quakers in the Union Fire Company would vote a fund of sixty pounds for the purchase of tickets in the lottery, remembering the incident, which has just been related, he said to his friend, Syng, one of its members, "If we fail, let us move the purchase of a fire-engine with the money; the Quakers can have no objection to that; and then, if you nominate me and I you as a committee for that purpose, we will buy a great gun, which is certainly a *fire engine*." But there was no real danger of the fund not being voted. The company consisted of thirty members, of whom twenty-two were Quakers. The remaining eight punctually attended the meeting, at which the vote was to be taken. Only one Quaker, Mr. James Morris, appeared to oppose the grant. The proposition, he said, with the confidence that usually marks statements in a democratic community about the preponderance of popular opinion, ought never to have been made, as Friends were all against it, and it would create such discord as might break up the company. At any rate, he thought that, though the hour for business had arrived, a little time should be allowed for the appearance of other members of the company, who, he knew, intended to come for the purpose of voting against the proposition. While this suggestion was being combatted, who should appear but a waiter to tell Franklin that two gentlemen below desired to speak with him. These proved to be two of the Quaker members of the company. Eight of them, they said, were assembled at a tavern just by, who were ready to come and vote for the proposition, if they should be needed, but did not desire to be sent for, if their assistance could be dispensed with. Franklin then went back to Mr. Morris, and after a little seeming hesitation—for at times he had a way of piecing out the skin of the lion with the tail of the fox—agreed to a delay of another hour. This Mr. Morris admitted was extremely

fair. Nobody else came, and, upon the expiration of the hour, the proposition was carried by a vote of eight to one. Franklin was a thoroughly normal man himself, but his wit, patience and rare capacity for self-transformation usually enabled him to deal successfully with any degree of abnormality in others, however pronounced. "Sensible people," he once said to his sister Jane, "will give a bucket or two of water to a dry pump, that they may afterwards get from it all they have occasion for."

The next time that Franklin crosses the stage of war is when General Braddock and his men, in the buskins of high tragedy, are moving to their doom. It had been reported to the General that, not only had the Pennsylvania Assembly refused to vote money for the King's service, but that the Pennsylvanians themselves had sold provisions to the French, declined to aid in the construction of a road to the West, and withheld wagons and horses sorely needed by the expedition; and the General had just been compelled to settle down for a time in the temper of a chafed bull at Frederick, Maryland, for the want of wagons and horses to transport his army to Fort Duquesne, which he afterwards told Franklin could hardly detain him above three or four days on his triumphant progress to Niagara and Frontenac. Forts, he seemed to think, to recall Franklin's simile, could be taken as easily as snuff. Under these circumstances, the Pennsylvania Assembly decided to ask Franklin to visit Braddock's camp, ostensibly as Deputy Postmaster-General, for the purpose of arranging a plan, by which the General could effectively keep in postal touch with the Colonial Governors, but really for the purpose of removing the prejudices which the General had formed against Pennsylvania. And a pleasant April journey that must have been for the mounted Franklin through Pennsylvania and Delaware, and over "the green-walled hills of Maryland," with his son, and the Governors of New York and Massa-

chusetts, also mounted, as his companions. That such a brave company, as it passed through the mild vernal air of that delightful season from stage to stage of its itinerary, experienced no dearth of hospitable offices, we may rest assured. One Maryland gentleman, the "amiable and worthy" Colonel Benjamin Tasker, who entertained Franklin and William Franklin on this journey with great hospitality and kindness at his country place, even pleasantly claimed that a whirlwind, which Franklin made the subject of a most graphic description in a letter to Peter Collinson, had been got up by him on purpose to treat Mr. Franklin.

It was probably the energy and resource of Franklin that were really responsible for Braddock's defeat, paradoxical as this may sound. When that brave but rash and infatuated general and his officers found that only twenty-five wagons could be obtained in Virginia and Maryland for the expedition, they declared that it was at an end; not less than one hundred and fifty wagons being necessary for the purpose. Their hopes, however, were revived when Franklin remarked that it was a pity that the army had not landed in Pennsylvania, as almost every farmer in that Colony had his wagon. This observation was eagerly pounced upon by Braddock, and Franklin was duly commissioned to procure the needed wagons. With such consummate art did he, in an address published by him at Lancaster, partly by persuasion, and partly by threats, work upon the feelings of the prosperous farmers of York, Lancaster and Cumberland Counties that in two weeks the one hundred and fifty wagons, with two hundred and fifty-nine pack-horses, were on their way to Braddock's camp. Nay more; with the aid of William Franklin, who knew something of camp life and its wants, he drew up a list of provisions for Braddock's subaltern officers, whose means were too limited to enable them to victual themselves comfortably for the march,

and induced the Pennsylvania Assembly to make a present of them to these officers. The twenty parcels, in which the provisions were packed, were each placed upon a horse and presented to a subaltern together with the horse itself. The twenty horses and their packs arrived in camp as soon as the wagons, and were very thankfully received. The kindness of Franklin in procuring them was acknowledged in letters to him from the colonels of the two regiments composing Braddock's army in the most grateful terms, and Braddock was so delighted with his services in furnishing the wagons and pack-horses that he not only thanked him repeatedly, craved his further assistance, and repaid him one thousand pounds of a sum amounting to some thirteen hundred pounds which he had advanced, but wrote home a letter in which, after inveighing against the "false dealings of all in this country," with whom he had been concerned, he commended Franklin's promptitude and fidelity, and declared that his conduct was almost the only instance of address and fidelity which he had seen in America. The balance of the amount that Franklin advanced he was never able to collect.

It is foreign to the plan of this book to describe the horrors of the sylvan inferno in which the huddled soldiers of Braddock stood about as much chance of successfully retaliating upon their flitting assailants as if the latter had been invisible spirits. It is enough for our purpose to say that, as soon as the wagoners, whom Franklin had gathered together, saw how things were going, they each took a horse from his wagon, and scampered away as fast as his steed could carry him, leaving too many wagons, provisions, pieces of artillery, stores and scalps behind them to make it worth the while of the victors to pursue them. Franklin states in the *Autobiography* that, when Braddock, with whom he dined daily at Frederick, spoke of passing from Fort Duquesne to Niagara, and from

Niagara to Frontenac, as lightly as a traveller might speak of the successive inns at which he was to bait on a peaceful journey, he conceived some doubts and fears as to the event of the campaign. He might well have done so, for he knew, if Braddock did not, what a nimble, painted and befeathered Indian in the crepuscular shades of the primeval American forest was. We also learn from the *Autobiography* that when the Doctors Bond came to Franklin to ask him to subscribe to fireworks, to be set off upon the fall of Fort Duquesne, he looked grave, and said that it would be time enough to prepare for the rejoicing when they knew that they had occasion to rejoice. All this was natural enough in a man whose temper was cautious, and who had dined daily for some time with Braddock. "The General presum'd too much, and was too secure. This the Event proves, but it was my Opinion from the time I saw him and convers'd with him." These were the words of Franklin in a letter to Peter Collinson shortly after the catastrophe. But, when we remember his written assurance in his Lancaster address to the Pennsylvania farmers that the service, to which their wagons and horses would be put, would be light and easy, and above all the individual promises of indemnity, tantamount to the pledge of his entire fortune, which he gave to these farmers, we cannot help feeling that Franklin's doubts and fears were not quite so strong as he afterwards honestly believed them to be, and that his second sight in this instance was, perhaps, somewhat like that of the clairvoyant, mentioned in the letter, contributed by his friend, Joseph Breintnal to one of his Busy-Body essays, who was "only able to discern Transactions about the Time, and for the most Part after their happening." Apart from the evidence afforded by the expedition that, if Braddock had been as able a general as Franklin was a commissary, its result would have been different, its chief interest to the biographer of Franklin

consists in the light that it sheds upon the self-satisfied ignorance of American conditions and the complete want of sympathy with the Americans themselves which subsequently aided in rendering the efforts of Franklin to secure a fair hearing in London for his countrymen so difficult. When Franklin ventured to express apprehension that the slender line of Braddock's army, nearly four miles long, might be ambushed by the Indians, while winding its way through the woods, and be cut like a thread into several pieces, Braddock smiled at his simplicity and replied, "These savages may, indeed, be a formidable enemy to your raw American militia, but upon the King's regular and disciplin'd troops, sir, it is impossible they should make any impression." He saw enough before he was fatally wounded to realize that the very discipline of his British soldiers was their undoing, when contending with such a mobile and wily foe as the Indian in the forest, and that a few hundred provincials, skulking behind trees, and giving their French and Indian antagonists a taste of their own tactics, were worth many thousands of such regulars even as his brave veterans. That he came to some conclusion of this kind before the close of his life we may infer from what Captain Orme told Franklin and what Franklin tells us in the *Autobiography*.

> Captain Orme [says Franklin], who was one of the general's aids-de-camp, and, being grievously wounded, was brought off with him, and continu'd with him to his death, which happen'd in a few days, told me that he was totally silent all the first day, and at night only said "*Who would have thought it?*" That he was silent again the following day, saying only at last, "*We shall better know how to deal with them another time*"; and dy'd in a few minutes after.

There was not to be another time for this intrepid but reckless soldier, who, true to the broad, red banner of

England, died like a bulldog with his iron jaws set to the last, but the first time might have sufficed for his task if he had only taken Franklin's hint, or freely consulted the advice of George Washington and the other provincial officers who accompanied him, or had not reduced his army merely to the condition of legs without eyes by treating the hundred Indians, invaluable as guides and scouts, whom George Croghan had brought to his aid, with such neglect and slights that they all, by successive defections, gradually dropped away from him.

In the *Autobiography* Franklin contrasts the conduct of the British on their way from the sea to the unbroken wilderness with the conduct of our French allies when making their way from Rhode Island to Yorktown. The former, he says, from their landing till they got beyond the settlements, plundered and stripped the inhabitants, totally ruining some poor families, besides insulting, abusing and confining such persons as remonstrated. This was enough, he adds, to put the Americans out of conceit of such defenders, if they had really wanted any. The French, on the other hand, though traversing the most inhabited part of America for a distance of nearly seven hundred miles, occasioned not the smallest complaint for the loss of a pig, a chicken, or even an apple. Perhaps this was partly because the people gratefully gave them everything that they wanted before there was any occasion to take it. But it was the pusillanimous misbehavior of Colonel Dunbar, left by Braddock in the rear of his army to bring along the heavier part of his stores, provisions and baggage which converted disaster into disgrace. As soon as the fugitives from the battle reached his camp, the panic that they brought with them was instantly imparted to him and his entire force. Though he had at his command more than a thousand men, he thought of nothing better to do than to turn his draft horses to the purposes of flight, and to give all

his stores and ammunition to the flames. When he reached the settlements, he was met with requests from the Governors of Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania that he would station his troops on the frontier of those states so as to protect them from the fury of the savages, but, so far from stopping to protect anybody else, not one jot of speed did he abate until, to use Franklin's words, "he arriv'd at Philadelphia, where the inhabitants could protect him." "This whole transaction," declares the *Autobiography*, "gave us Americans the first suspicion that our exalted ideas of the prowess of British regulars had not been well founded."

When Dunbar did abandon the shelter which he had found at Philadelphia, it was only to give the people of Pennsylvania a parting whiff of his quality. He promised Franklin that, if three poor farmers of Lancaster County would meet him at Trenton, where he expected to be in a few days on his march to New York, he would surrender to them certain indentured servants of theirs whom he had enlisted. Although they took him at his word, and met him at Trenton, at considerable sacrifice of time and money, he refused to perform his promise.

The defeat of Braddock and its consequences left the province fully exposed to Indian incursions, and again its ablest and most public-spirited man was compelled to take the lead in providing for its defense. His first act was to draft and push through the Assembly a bill for organizing and disciplining a militia. Each company was to elect a captain, a lieutenant and an ensign, subject to the confirmation of the Governor, and the officers, so elected, of the companies forming each regiment, were to elect a colonel, a lieutenant-colonel and a major for the regiment, subject to the same confirmation. But nothing about the bill is so interesting as the further evidence that it affords of Franklin's finesse in the management of Quakers. The Articles of Association, provided for in

the Act, were to be purely voluntary, and nothing in the Act was to be taken as authorizing the Governor or the military officers mentioned in it to prescribe any regulations that would in the least affect such of the inhabitants of the Province as were scrupulous about bearing arms, either in their liberties, persons or estates. There is almost a gleam of the true Franklin humor in the recital in the Act, which, though other parts of the Act safeguarded the Quaker crotchet as to fighting, made the Quaker majority in the Assembly admit that there were some persons in the Province who had been disciplined in the art of war, and even—strange as that might be—conscientiously thought it their duty to fight in defense of their country, their wives, their families and estates. The Militia Act was followed by Franklin's *Dialogue between X Y and Z* explaining and defending it. This paper is garnished with apt references to the Bible, and, as a whole, is written with much vivacity and force. Its object was to convince the English, Scotch-Irish and German Pennsylvanians that they should fight to keep their own scalps on their heads even though they could not do this without accomplishing as much for the Quakers. "For my part," says Z, "I am no coward, but hang me if I'll fight to save the *Quakers*." "That is to say," says X, "you won't pump ship because 'twill save the rats, as well as yourself." And to Z's suggestion that, if the Act was carried into execution, and proved a good one, they might have nothing to say against the Quakers at the next election, X, no unknown quantity, but Franklin himself, replies with this burst of eloquent exhortation which makes us half doubt Franklin when he says that he was not an orator:

O my friends, let us on this occasion cast from us all these little party views, and consider ourselves as *Englishmen* and *Pennsylvanians*. Let us think only of the service of our

king, the honour and safety of our country, and vengeance on its murdering enemies. If good be done, what imports it by whom 'tis done? The glory of serving and saving others is superior to the advantage of being served or secured. Let us resolutely and generously unite in our country's cause, (in which to die is the sweetest of all deaths) and may the God of Armies bless our honest endeavours.

When the defeat of Braddock first became known to Governor Morris, he hastened to consult with Franklin about the proper measures for preventing the desertion of the back counties of Pennsylvania, and he even went so far as to offer to make him a general, if he would undertake to conduct a force of provincials against Fort Duquesne. Franklin had, or with his wise modesty affected to have, a suspicion that the offer was inspired not so much by the Governor's confidence in his military abilities as by the Governor's desire to utilize his great personal influence for the purpose of enlisting soldiers and securing money to pay them with; and that, perhaps, without the taxation of the Proprietary estates. The suspicion we should say was groundless. In the land of the blind the one-eyed mole is king, and the probability is that the Governor was actuated by nothing more than the belief that in a province, where there were no seasoned generals, a man with Franklin's talents, energy and resource would be likely to prove the best impromptu commander that he could find. If so, his calculations came to nothing, for Franklin, who always saw things as they were, could discern no reason why he should be unfit to be a colonel and yet fit to be a general. When, however, the Militia Act had been passed, and Z had been silenced by X, and military companies were springing up as rapidly as mushrooms in a Pennsylvania meadow, he did permit himself to be prevailed upon by the Governor to take charge of the northwestern frontier of the Province, and to bend his energies to the task of enlisting soldiers and

erecting forts for its protection. He did not think himself qualified for even this quasi-military post, but posterity has taken the liberty of differing from him in this regard. Having speedily rallied five hundred and sixty men to his standard, and called his son, who had had some military training, to his side, as his aide-de-camp, he assembled his little army at Bethlehem, the chief seat of the Moravians, and divided it into three detachments. One he sent off towards the Minisink to build a fort in the upper part of the exposed territory, another he sent off to build a fort in the lower part of the same territory, and the third he conducted himself to Gnadenhutten, a Moravian village, recently reduced to blood and ashes by the Indians, for the purpose of erecting a third fort there.

When he reached Bethlehem, he found that not only had the Moravian brethren, who, he had had reason to believe, were conscientiously averse to war, erected a stockade around the principal buildings of the town, and purchased a supply of arms and ammunition for themselves in New York, but that they had even placed a quantity of stones between the windows of their high houses, to be thrown down by their women upon the heads of any Indians by whom these buildings might be invested. "Common sense, aided by present danger, will sometimes be too strong for whimsical opinions," dryly comments Franklin in the *Autobiography*.

How death kept his court in that tortured land may be inferred from an incident recorded by Franklin in the *Autobiography*. Just before he left Bethlehem for Gnadenhutten, eleven farmers who had been driven from their plantations by the Indians obtained from him each a gun with a suitable supply of ammunition, and returned to their homes to fetch away their cattle. Ten of the eleven were killed by the Indians. The one who escaped reported that they could not discharge their guns because the priming had become wet with rain—a mishap

which the Indians were too dexterous to allow to befall their pieces. The same rain descended upon Franklin and his men on their march from Bethlehem to Gnadenhutten, and disabled their guns too, but fortunately, though at one point they had to pass through a gap in the mountains which their foes might well have turned to deadly account, they were not attacked on the march. Once arrived at Gnadenhutten, as soon as the detachment had sheltered itself under rude huts, and interred with more decent completeness the massacred victims, who had been only half buried by their demoralized neighbors, it proceeded to fell trees and to erect a fort, or rather stockade, with a circumference of four hundred and fifty-five feet. "How bow'd the woods beneath their sturdy stroke," was not more aptly written of the peasants whom Gray's *Elegy* has immortalized, than it might have been of the seventy brawny axemen in Franklin's camp, two of whom could by Franklin's watch in six minutes cut down a pine fourteen inches in diameter. In a week, in spite of drenching rains, a stockade had been constructed of sufficient strength, flimsy as it was, to fend off cannonless Indians. It consisted of palisades eighteen feet long, planted in a trench three feet deep, loopholes, and a gallery, at an elevation of six feet around its interior, for its defenders to stand on and take aim through the loopholes. When it had been finished, a swivel gun was mounted at one of its angles and discharged to let the Indians know that the garrison was supplied with such pieces. They were not far off; for when Franklin began, after he had furnished himself with a place of refuge, in case of retreat, to throw out scouting parties over the adjacent country, he found that they had been watching his movements from the hills with their feet dangling in holes, in which, for warmth, fires, made of charcoal, had been kindled. With their fires going in this way, there was neither light, flame, sparks, nor even

smoke, to betray their presence; but it would seem that they were too few in numbers to feel that they could hazard an attack upon the stockade-builders.

The impression left upon the mind by this expedition is that it was managed by Franklin with no little good sense and efficiency, though it does seem to us that a man who never lacked the capacity to invent any mechanical device called for by his immediate needs ought to have been too provident to find himself in a narrow defile with guns as impotent as those of the ten poor farmers who had perished that very day. It was inexcusable in Poor Richard at any rate to forget his own saying, "For want of a Nail the Shoe was lost; for want of a Shoe the Horse was lost; and for want of a Horse the Rider was lost, being overtaken and slain by the Enemy; all for want of care about a Horse-shoe Nail." In his instructions, before he left Bethlehem, to Captain Vanetta, in relation to certain operations, which the latter was to undertake with a separate force against the Indians, Franklin, though he said nothing about trusting in God, took care to warn the captain to keep his powder dry. The expedition was cut short by a letter from the Governor and letters from Franklin's friends in the Assembly urging him to attend the sessions about to be held by that body. There was no reason why he should not do so; for the three forts were completed, and the country people, relying upon the protection afforded by them, were content to remain on their farms; and especially too as Colonel Clapham, a New England officer, conversant with Indian warfare, had accepted the command in the place of Franklin, and had been introduced by the latter to his men as a soldier much better fitted to lead them than himself. But Franklin, though he had never been engaged in battle, found on his return to Philadelphia that he had won a military prestige upon which he could not easily turn his back. He was elected colonel of the Philadelphia

regiment under such circumstances that he was unable again to decline the honor of a colonelcy on the score of unfitness. His regiment consisted of about twelve hundred presentable men, with an artillery company, furnished with six brass field-pieces, which the company had become expert enough to fire off twelve times in a minute.

The first time [says Franklin in the *Autobiography*] I reviewed my regiment they accompanied me to my house, and would salute me with some rounds fired before my door, which shook down and broke several glasses of my electrical apparatus. And my new honour proved not much less brittle; for all our commissions were soon after broken by a repeal of the law in England.

If, however, his colonelcy had not been marked by any considerable effusion of blood, he had acquired fame enough to arouse the intense jealousy of Thomas Penn, the Proprietary. When Franklin was on the point of setting out on a journey to Virginia, the officers of his regiment took it into their heads to escort him out of town as far as the Lower Ferry. This ceremonious proceeding was unexpectedly sprung upon him; otherwise, he says, he would have prevented it, being naturally averse to all flourishes of that sort. As it was, just as he was getting on horseback, the officers, thirty or forty in number, came to his door, all mounted, and in their uniforms, and, as soon as the cavalcade commenced to move, made things worse by drawing their swords and riding with them naked the entire distance to the Lower Ferry. The Proprietary, when he heard of the incident, was deeply affronted. No such honor, forsooth, he declared, had ever been paid to him, when in the Province, nor to any of his Governors, and was only proper when due homage was being paid to princes of the blood royal; all of which Franklin innocently tells us might be so for aught such a

novice in matters of this kind as he knew. So aroused indeed was the Proprietary by the affair, coming as it did on the heels of the grudge that he already owed Franklin for his part in insisting that the Proprietary estates should sustain their just share of the common burden of taxation, that he even denounced Franklin to the British ministry as the arch obstructionist of measures for the King's service, citing the pomp of this occasion as evidence of the fact that Franklin harbored the intention of taking the government of the Province out of his hands by force. His malice, in fact, did not stop short even of an effort to deprive Franklin of his office as Deputy Postmaster-General for the Colonies; with no effect, however, except that of eliciting a gentle admonition to Franklin from Sir Everard Fawkener, the British Postmaster-General.

Thus ended for a time the military career of Franklin amid the crash of his electrical apparatus and the gleam of unfleshed swords. Susceptible of subdivision as his life is, it would hardly justify a separate chapter on Franklin the Soldier; but, all the same, by the splendidly efficient service rendered by him to Braddock, by his pamphlet, *Plain Truth*, by his Articles of Association and his battery, by his X Y Z dialogue and Militia Act, by his tact in conciliating and circumventing the awkward Quaker conviction that "peace unweaponed conquers every wrong," and by the energy and sound judgment brought by him to the expedition to Gnadenhutten he had established his right to be considered in war as well as in peace the man whose existence could be less easily spared than that of any other Pennsylvanian. There is a pleasure in speculating on the turn that his future might have taken if the terms in which Braddock recommended him to the favor of the Crown had been followed by the fall of Fort Duquesne instead of the battle of the Monongahela. While in his relations to Braddock's expedition he was

influenced, as he always was in every such case, mainly by generous public spirit, yet it is manifest, too, that he was fully alive to the significance that his first helpful contact with such a British commander as Braddock might have for his own self-advancement.

The sterner stuff in the character of Franklin, however, was to be still further tried. During the year succeeding his second return from England in 1762, the minds of the people in the western counties of Pennsylvania, and especially of the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, whose passions were easily deflected into channels of religious fanaticism, were inflamed almost to madness by Indian atrocities, and this mental condition resulted in an act of abominable butchery, such as has rarely blackened even the history of the American Indian himself. Living not far from the town of Lancaster, on the Manor of Conestoga, was the remnant of what had once been a considerable tribe of the Six Nations. The members of this tribe sent messengers to welcome the first English settlers of Pennsylvania with presents of venison, corn and furs, and entered into a treaty of friendship with William Penn which, in the figurative language of the savage, was to last "as long as the Sun should shine, or the Waters run in the Rivers," and which in point of fact was faithfully observed by both parties. In the course of time, as the whites purchased land from them, and hemmed them in more and more closely, they settled down upon a part of the Manor assigned to them by William Penn which they were not allowed by the Provincial Government to alienate, and here they lived on terms of unbroken amity with their white neighbors. In the further course of time, the tribe dwindled to such an extent that there were only twenty survivors, seven men, five women, and eight children of both sexes, whose means of subsistence were supplied to some extent by mendicancy and the chase, but mainly by the sale to the whites of the brooms, baskets and

wooden ladles made by the women. The oldest of the band, a man named Shehaes, was old enough to have been present when the original chain of friendship between the tribe and William Penn was brightened by a second treaty between the same contracting parties. The youngest were infants. There is good reason to believe that at least one or two of the band had been in secret commerce with the hostile Indians whose shocking barbarities had filled the souls of such of the Pennsylvania borderers as had not been tomahawked, carried off into captivity or driven from their homes with sensations little short of frenzied desperation. On Wednesday, the 14th of December, 1763, fifty men from the territory about Paxton, a small town in Pennsylvania, on the Susquehanna above Conestoga, all mounted, and armed with firelocks, hangers and hatchets, descended upon the squalid huts of this band, about dawn, and slaughtered in cold blood three men, two women and a young boy—the only members of the vagabond band whom they found at home. The firelocks, hangers and hatchets were all used in perpetrating the bloody work, and the miserable victims were scalped and horribly mangled besides. Shehaes himself was cut to pieces in his bed. Then, after seizing upon such booty as was to be found, and applying the torch to most of the huts, the murderers rode away through the snow-drifts to their homes. A shudder of horror passed through the whites in the vicinity, and a cry of bitter lamentation went up from the younger survivors of the band when they returned to the sickening spot, where the charred bodies of their parents and other relations, looking as one observer said like half burnt logs, told the hideous story.

We had known the greater part of them from children [said Susannah Wright, a humane white woman, who resided near the spot], had been always intimate with them. Three

or four of the women were sensible and civilized, and the Indians' children used to play with ours, and oblige them all they could. We had many endearing recollections of them, and the manner of effecting the brutal enormity so affected us, that we had to beg visitors to forbear to speak of it.

The public officials of the Province appear to have faithfully performed their duty immediately after the tragedy. The survivors were gathered together by the sheriff of Lancaster, and placed in the workhouse for safety. A hundred and forty other friendly Indians, who had been converted by the Moravians, fearing that they might be visited with just such violence, had found, before the descent upon Conestoga, shelter near Philadelphia, at the public expense, under the guidance of a good Moravian minister. The Governor, John Penn, issued a proclamation calling upon all the civil and military officers of the Colony and all His Majesty's other liege subjects to do their duty. But the Governor soon found that he was reckoning with that Scotch-Irish temper, which, at its highest point of rigidity, is like concrete reinforced with iron rods, and which in this instance was more or less countenanced by the sympathy of the entire Province. Despite the proclamation of the Governor under the great seal of the Colony, the incensed frontiersmen, now fired by the fresh taste of blood as well as by the original conviction of the settlements from which they came that an angry God had turned his face from the inhabitants of Pennsylvania, because they had not smitten, hip and thigh, and utterly destroyed the red-skinned Amorites and Canaanites, again assembled, and riding into Lancaster, armed as on the previous occasion, broke in the door of its workhouse and dispatched every solitary one of the poor wretches who had escaped their pitiless hands. Thereupon, they mounted

their horses, huzzaed in triumph, and rode off unmolested. The whole thing was like the flight of the pigeon-hawk, so swift and deadly was it; for, within ten or twelve minutes after the alarm was given, the borderers were again in their saddles. By a large part of the population of the Province the deed was applauded as the infliction of just vengeance upon a race which had many unspeakable enormities to answer for in its relations to the whites; by the people of the Province generally, except the Quakers, it was but languidly condemned, and the proclamations of the Governor proved to be mere paper trumpets, for all the efforts of the Government to bring the criminals to justice were wholly unsuccessful.

But there was one man in the Province, and he not a Quaker either, to whom justice, mercy and law had not lost their meaning. In his *Narrative of the Late Massacres in Lancaster County*, Franklin, in words as burning as any ever inspired by righteous wrath, denounced with blistering force the assassins and their crimes. Anger, Lord Bacon tells us, makes even dull men witty. Just indignation in this case lifted one of the soberest and most self-contained of men to the level of impassioned feeling and of almost lyrical speech. With a firm yet rapid hand, Franklin sketched the history of the tribe, its peaceful intercourse with the whites, its decline until it numbered only the twenty creatures whom he brings vividly before us with a few familiar strokes of individual description, the infamous circumstances that attended the destruction of defenseless weakness in hut and workhouse. Then, along with illustrations of clemency and magnanimity derived from many different historical and national sources, and even from the annals of semi-civilized and barbarous communities, and graphically contrasted with the conduct of the ruthless men who had wreaked their will upon the Conestoga villagers, male and female, and their children, he poured out a tide

of scathing execration upon the heads of the malefactors which showed as nothing else in all his life ever showed how deep were the fountains that fed the calm flow of his ordinary benevolence.

O, ye unhappy Perpetrators of this horrid Wickedness! [he exclaimed, rising with a natural crescendo of exalted feeling even into the sublimated province of the apostrophe] reflect a Moment on the Mischief ye have done, the Disgrace ye have brought on your Country, on your Religion, and your Bible, on your Families and Children! Think on the Destruction of your captivated Country-folks (now among the wild *Indians*) which probably may follow, in Resentment of your Barbarity! Think on the Wrath of the United *Five Nations*, hitherto our Friends, but now provoked by your murdering one of their Tribes, in Danger of becoming our bitter Enemies. Think of the mild and good Government you have so audaciously insulted; the Laws of your King, your Country, and your God, that you have broken; the infamous Death that hangs over your Heads; for Justice, though slow, will come at last. All good People everywhere detest your Actions. You have imbrued your Hands in innocent Blood; how will you make them clean? The dying Shrieks and Groans of the Murdered, will often sound in your Ears. Their Spectres will sometimes attend you, and affright even your innocent Children! Fly where you will, your Consciences will go with you. Talking in your Sleep shall betray you, in the Delirium of a Fever you yourselves shall make your own Wickedness known.

These were honest, fearless words, but, so far as we know, the Erynnes did not plant any stings of conscience in the breasts of the men from Paxton District whom Franklin elsewhere in this Narrative described as the Christian white savages of Paxton and Donegal. On the contrary, several hundred men from the same region, armed with rifles and hatchets, and clad in hunting shirts, marched towards Philadelphia with the avowed purpose of

killing the Moravian Indians who had found refuge in its vicinity. The city was reduced to a state of terror, and Governor Penn, like his predecessors, could think of nothing more expedient to do than to invoke the advice and assistance of Franklin. He accordingly made Franklin's house his headquarters, and freely consulted with him touching every defensive measure required by the crisis. Again Franklin formed an association for the protection of Philadelphia; and, under his auspices, the citizens of Philadelphia were enrolled into nine companies, six of infantry, two of horse, and one of artillery. "Governor Penn," he afterwards declared in a letter to Lord Kames, "made my house for some time his head-quarters, and did everything by my advice; so that, for about forty-eight hours, I was a very great man; as I had been once some years before, in a time of public danger." On came the insurgents until they reached Germantown, seven miles from the city. Here they were met by four citizens, of whom Franklin was one, who had been requested by the Governor and his Council to confer with them. While the conference was pending, Franklin's regiment, supported by a detachment of King's troops, remained in the city under arms, and even young Quakers labored incessantly to complete the intrenchments around the barracks, in which the menaced Indians with their Moravian shepherd had been placed. Indeed, now that the waves of the Presbyterian invasion were lapping his own doorsill, the Quaker of every age in Philadelphia appears to have entirely lost sight of the duty of non-resistance. The conference satisfied the insurgents that graver work was ahead of them than that of slaying and scalping old men, women and children, and they retraced their steps. "The fighting face we put on," said Franklin, in his letter to Lord Kames, "and the reasonings we used with the insurgents, . . . having turned them back and restored quiet to the city, I became a less man than ever; for I had,

by these transactions, made myself many enemies among the populace." He had, indeed, but not one whose enmity was not more honorable to him than the friendship of even all his host of friends.

Nor did the eagerness of Franklin to bring the Paxton assassins to justice cease with the conference at Germantown. Though pamphlets were sold in the streets of Philadelphia lauding their acts, and inveighing against all who had assisted in protecting the Moravian Indians, though the Governor himself was weak or wicked enough to curry political favor with the party which approved the recent outrages, Franklin still inflexibly maintained that the law should be vindicated by the condign punishment of the Paxton ringleaders. In another place we shall see what his resolute stand cost him politically.

CHAPTER IV

FRANKLIN'S FAMILY RELATIONS

WHEN we turn from Franklin's philanthropic zeal and public spirit to his more intimate personal and social traits, we find much that is admirable, not a little that is lovable, and some things with quite a different aspect. His vow of self-correction, when he had sowed his wild oats and reaped the usual harvest of smut and tares, was, as we have intimated, retrospective as well as prospective. He violated his obligations, as his brother James' apprentice, by absconding from Boston before his time was up, and added aggravation to his original offence by returning to Boston, and exhibiting his genteel new suit, watch and silver money to his brother's journeymen, while he descanted to them upon the land of milk and honey from which he had brought back these indicia of prosperity; his brother all the time standing by grum and sullen, and struggling with the emotions which afterwards caused him to say to his stepmother, when she expressed her wish that the brothers might become reconciled, that Benjamin had insulted him in such a manner before his people that he could never forget or forgive it. In this, however, he was mistaken, as Franklin tersely observes in the *Autobiography*. Some ten years subsequently, on his return from one of his decennial visits to Boston, Franklin stopped over at Newport, to see this brother, who had

removed thither, and he found him in a state of rapid physical decline. The former differences were forgotten, the meeting was very cordial and affectionate, and, in compliance with a request, then made of him by James, Franklin took James' son, a boy of ten, as an apprentice, into his own printing house at Philadelphia. Indeed, he did more than he was asked to do; for he sent the boy for some years to school before putting him to work. Afterwards, when the nephew became old enough to launch out into business on his own account, Franklin helped him to establish himself as a printer in New England with gifts of printing materials and a loan of more than two hundred pounds. Thus was the first *deleatur* of pricking conscience duly heeded by Franklin, the Printer; the first *erratum* revised. And it is but just to him to say that the *erratum*, if the whole truth were told, was probably more venial than his forgiving spirit allowed him fully to disclose. Under the indentures of apprenticeship, it was as incumbent upon the older brother to abstain from excessive punishment as it was upon the younger not to abscond. Franklin, in the *Autobiography*, while stating that James was passionate and often beat him, also states that James was otherwise not an ill-natured man, and finds extenuation for his brother's violence in the fear of the latter that the success of the Silence Dogood letters might make the young apprentice vain, and in the fact that the young apprentice himself was perhaps too saucy and provoking. Franklin almost always had a word of generous palliation for anyone who had wronged him. The chances, we think, distinctly are that the real nature of the relations between James and Benjamin are to be found not in the text of the *Autobiography* but in the note to it in which its author declares that the harsh and tyrannical treatment of his brother might have been a means of impressing him with that aversion to arbitrary power which had stuck to him through his whole life.

Nor should it be forgotten that the younger brother did not bring the Canaan south of the Delaware, nor the watch and other evidences of the good fortune that he had found there, to the attention of James' journeymen until James, whom he had called to see at the printing house, where these journeymen were employed, had received him coldly, looked him all over, and turned to his work again. There is the fact besides, if Franklin is to be permitted to testify in his own behalf, that, when the disputes between the two brothers were submitted to their father, whose good sense and fairness frequently led him to be chosen as an arbitrator between contending parties, the judgment was generally in Benjamin's favor; either, he says, because he was usually in the right (he fancied) or else was a better pleader. Another *erratum* was revised when, after plighting his troth to Deborah Read on the eve of his first voyage to London, and then forgetting it in the distractions of the English capital, he subsequently married her. Still another was revised when he discharged the debt to Mr. Vernon, which occasioned him so much mental distress. The debt arose in this manner: On his return journey to Philadelphia, after his first visit to Boston, he was asked by Mr. Vernon, a friend of his brother, John, who resided at Newport, to collect the sum of thirty-five pounds currency due to Mr. Vernon in Pennsylvania, and to keep it until Mr. Vernon gave him instructions about its remittance. The money was duly collected by Franklin on his way to Philadelphia, but unfortunately for him his youthful friend Collins, before his departure from Boston, had decided to remove to Pennsylvania, too, and proceeding from Boston to New York in advance of him, was his companion from New York to Philadelphia. While awaiting Franklin's arrival at New York, Collins drank up and gambled away all his own money. The consequence was that Franklin had to pay his lodging for him at New York

and defray all his subsequent expenses. The journey to Philadelphia could be completed only with the aid of the Vernon debt, and, after the two reached Philadelphia, Collins, being unable to obtain any employment because of his bad habits, and knowing that Franklin had the balance of the Vernon collection in his hands, repeatedly borrowed sums from him, promising to repay them as soon as he was earning something himself. By these loans the amount collected for Mr. Vernon was finally reduced to such an extent that Franklin was at a painful loss to know what he should do in case Mr. Vernon demanded payment. The thought of his situation haunted him for some years to come, but happily for him Mr. Vernon was an exception to the saying of Poor Richard that creditors are a superstitious sect, great observers of set days and times. He kindly made no demand upon Franklin for quite a long period, and in the end merely put him in mind of the debt, though not pressing him to pay it; whereupon Franklin wrote to him, we are told by the *Autobiography*, an ingenuous letter of acknowledgment, craved his forbearance a little longer, which was granted, and later on, as soon as he was able to do so, paid the principal with interest and many thanks. Just why Mr. Vernon was such an indulgent creditor the *Autobiography* does not reveal. If, as Franklin subsequently wrote to Strahan, the New England people were artful to get into debt and but poor pay, Mr. Vernon at any rate furnishes evidence that they could be generous lenders. Perhaps Mr. Vernon simply had his favorable prepossessions like many other men who knew Franklin in his early life, or perhaps he had some of Franklin's own quick sympathy with the trials and struggles of youth, and was not averse to lending him the use, even though compulsory, of a little capital, or, perhaps, he was restrained from dunning Franklin by his friendship for Franklin's brother.

The *erratum* into which Franklin fell in writing and publishing his freethinking dissertation on *Liberty and Necessity, Pleasure and Pain*, which was dedicated to his friend Ralph, he revised, as we have seen, by destroying all the copies upon which he could lay his hands and also, we might add, by a counter pamphlet in which he recanted and combated his own reasonings. In his unreflecting hours he mixed the poison; in his more reflective hours he compounded the antidote.

Franklin was guilty of another *erratum* when Ralph found that it was one thing to have an essay on Liberty dedicated to him by a friend and another thing to have the friend taking liberties with his mistress. This *erratum* was never revised by Franklin unless upon principles of revision with which Ralph himself at least could not find fault, as the history of the *erratum* is told in the *Autobiography*. The young woman in this case was a milliner, genteelly bred, sensible, lively, and of most pleasing conversation. Ralph, who, until Pope brought him back with a disillusioning thud to the dull earth by a shaft from the *Dunciad*, imagined himself to be endowed with an exalted poetic genius, read plays to her in the evenings, and finally formed a *liaison* with her. They lived together for a time, but, finding that her income was not sufficient to sustain them both and the child that was the fruit of the connection, he took charge of a country school where he taught ten or a dozen boys how to read and write at sixpence each a week, assumed Franklin's name because he did not wish the world to know that he had ever been so meanly employed, recommended his mistress to Franklin's protection, and, in spite of every dissuasive that Franklin could bring to bear upon him, including a copy of a great part of one of Young's satires, which set forth in a strong light the folly of courting the Muses, sent to Franklin from time to time profuse specimens of the *magnum opus* over which he was toiling. In

the meantime, the milliner, having suffered on Ralph's account in both reputation and estate, was occasionally compelled to obtain pecuniary assistance from Franklin. The result was that he grew fond of her society, and, presuming upon his importance to her, attempted familiarities with her which she repelled with a proper resentment, and communicated to Ralph, who, on his next return to London, let Franklin know that he considered all his obligations to him cancelled. As these obligations consisted wholly of sums that Franklin had lent to Ralph, or advanced on Ralph's account from time to time out of his earnings from his vocation as a printer, Franklin, we suppose, might fairly conclude, in accordance with Ralph's method of reasoning, that he had revised the *erratum* by duly paying the penalty for it in terms of money, even if in no other form of atonement. At the time, he consoled himself with the reflection that Ralph's cancellation of obligations, which he had no means of paying, was not very material, and that Ralph's withdrawal of his friendship at least meant relief from further pecuniary loans. He does not say so, but exemption from further instalments of the laboring epic must have counted for something too. The cross-currents of human existence, however, were destined again to bring Ralph and Franklin into personal intercourse. It was after Franklin had arrived in England in 1757 as the agent of the People of Pennsylvania and Ralph, not a Homer or Milton, as he had fondly hoped to be, but a historian, pamphleteer and newspaper writer of no contemptible abilities, had gotten beyond the necessity of doing what Pope in a truculent note to the *Dunciad* had charged him with doing, namely, writing on both sides of a controversy on one and the same day, and afterwards publicly justifying the morality of his conduct. Indeed, he had gotten far enough beyond it at this stage of his life to be even a sufferer from the gout, and, remarkable as it may seem, in the light of the manner

in which he had paid his indebtedness to Franklin, to be equal to the nicety of returning to the Duke of Bedford one hundred and fifty of the two hundred pounds that the Duke of Bedford had contributed to the support of the *Protestor*, a newspaper conducted by Ralph in the interest of the Duke of Bedford against the Duke of Newcastle. The *Autobiography* states that from Governor Denny Franklin had previously learned that Ralph was still alive, that he was esteemed one of the best political writers in England, had been employed in the dispute between Prince Frederick and the King, and had obtained a pension of three hundred a year; that his reputation was indeed small as a poet, Pope having damned his poetry in the *Dunciad*, but that his prose was thought as good as any man's. A few months after receiving this information, Franklin arrived in England, and Ralph called on him to renew the tie sundered for some thirty years. One sequel was a letter from Franklin to his wife in which he wrote to her as follows:

I have seen Mr. Ralph, and delivered him Mrs. Garrigues's letter. He is removed from Turnham Green, when I return, I will tell you everything relating to him, in the meantime I must advise Mrs. Garrigue not to write to him again, till I send her word how to direct her letters, he being unwilling, for some good reasons, that his present wife should know anything of his having any connections in America. He expresses great affection for his daughter and grandchildren. He has but one child here.

Other *errata* of Franklin were due to the amorous disposition over which he took such little pains to draw the veil of delicacy and reserve. Sexual ardor has doubtless exerted quite as imperious a dominion in youth over some other great men, but none of them have been so willing to confess the overbearing force of its importunities. Speaking of the time prior to his marriage, when he was

twenty-four years of age, Franklin says in the *Autobiography:* "In the meantime, that hard-to-be-governed passion of youth hurried me frequently into intrigues with low women that fell in my way, which were attended with some expense and great inconvenience, besides a continual risque to my health by a distemper which of all things I dreaded, though by great good luck I escaped it." It was to his son, strangely enough, that this chapter of his personal history was unfolded. Franklin was writing a word of warning as well as of hope for his posterity, and he painted himself, as Cromwell wished to be painted, warts and all.

For such *errata* as these there was no atonement to be made except in the sense of self-degradation likely, in the case of every self-respecting man, to follow the illicit gratification of strong physical appetites, and this Franklin had too ingenuous a way of looking at sexual irregularity to feel very acutely. The only real reinforcement that a nature like his could find against what Ferdinand in the *Tempest* calls the suggestions of "our worser genius" was the sedative influence of marriage, its duties, its responsibilities, and its calm equable flow of mutual affection; and Franklin was early married and found in marriage and the human interests that cluster about it an uncommon measure of satisfaction and happiness.

It is an old, old story, that story of Benjamin and Deborah told in the *Autobiography*. It began on the memorable Sunday morning, when the runaway apprentice, shortly after landing at the Market Street wharf in Philadelphia, hungry, dirty from his journey, dressed in his working clothes, and with his great flap pockets stuffed with shirts and stockings, passed up Market Street before the eyes of his future wife, which were alit with merriment as he passed, clasping a great puffy Philadelphia roll under each arm and eating a third. She saw him from her father's door as he went by, present-

ing this "awkward, ridiculous appearance," and little realized that the ludicrous apparition which she saw was not only to be her lifelong consort, but, stranger as he then was to every human being in Philadelphia, was in coming years to confer upon that city no small part of the heritage of his own imperishable renown.

The pair were soon brought into close relations with each other. Keimer, the printer, with whom Benjamin found employment, could not lodge Benjamin in his own house for lack of furniture; so he found lodging for him with Mr. Read, Keimer's landlord and Deborah's father. And Benjamin was now in a very different plight from that in which she had first seen him; for he was earning a livelihood for himself, and his chest with better clothes in it than those that he had on when he was eating his roll under such difficulties had come around to him by sea. He was not long in forming "a great respect and affection" for Deborah, which he had some reason to believe were reciprocated by her. Courtship followed, but he was on the point of setting out for London on the fool's errand which Governor Keith had planned for him, he and Deborah were but a little over eighteen, and her mother thought that it would be more convenient for the marriage to take place on his return, after he had purchased in London the printing outfit that he was to buy upon the credit of Governor Keith, who really had no credit. "Perhaps, too," adds Franklin, "she thought my expectations not so well founded as I imagined them to be."

The fateful day came when the annual ship between London and Philadelphia was to sail. Of the fond parting we have no record except Franklin's old fashioned statement that in leaving he "interchang'd some promises with Miss Read." These promises, so far as he was concerned, were soon lost to memory in the lethean cares, diversions and dissipations of eighteenth century London. By degrees, Franklin tells us, he forgot his engagements with

Miss Read, and never wrote more than one letter to her, and that to let her know that he was not likely to return soon. "This," he says, "was another of the great *errata* of my life, which I should wish to correct if I were to live it over again." Another of those *errata* of his life, he might have added, in regard to which, like his use of Mr. Vernon's money, his approaches to Ralph's mistress, and his commerce with lewd wenches, the world, with which silence often passes as current as innocence, would never have been the wiser, if he had not chosen, as so few men have been sufficiently courageous and disinterested to do, to make beacons of his own sins for others to steer their lives by. He did return, as we know, but Miss Read was Miss Read no longer. In his absence, her friends, despairing of his return after the receipt of his letter by Deborah (how mercilessly he divulges it all), had persuaded her to marry another, one Rogers, a potter, "a worthless fellow, tho' an excellent workman, which was the temptation to her friends." With him, however, Franklin tells us, "she was never happy, and soon parted from him, refusing to cohabit with him or bear his name, it being now said that he had another wife." One more concise statement from Rogers's marital successor, and Rogers disappears as suddenly as if shot through a stage trap-door. "He got into debt, ran away in 1727 or 1728, went to the West Indies, and died there." At that time, the West Indies seem to have been the dust-pan into which all the human refuse of colonial America was swept.

In a letter to his friend Catherine Ray, in 1755, Franklin told her that the cords of love and friendship had in times past drawn him further than from Rhode Island to Philadelphia, "even back from England to Philadelphia." This statement, we fear, if not due to the facility with which every good husband is apt to forget that his wife was not the first woman that he fell in love with, must be

classed with Franklin's statement in the *Autobiography* that Sir Hans Sloane persuaded him to let him add an asbestos purse owned by Franklin to his museum of curiosities, his statement in a letter to his son that he was never sued until a bill in chancery was filed against him after his removal from the office of Deputy Postmaster-General, and his statement made at different times that he never asked for a public office. We know from Franklin's own pen that it was he who solicited from Sir Hans Sloane the purchase, and not Sir Hans Sloane who solicited from him the sale, of the asbestos purse; we know from the *Autobiography* that he was sued by some of the farmers to whom he gave his bond of indemnity at the time of Braddock's expedition long before his removal from the office of Deputy Postmaster-General, and we know, too, as the reader has already been told, that he sought Benger's office, as Deputy Postmaster-General of the Colonies, before death had done more than cast the shadow of his approach over Benger's face. There is a vast difference between the situation of a man, who relies upon his memory for the scattered incidents of his past life, and that of a biographer whose field of vision takes them all in at one glance. It is true that Franklin did not know, before he left London, that Deborah had married, but the reasons he gives in the *Autobiography* for desiring to return to Philadelphia are only that he had grown tired of London, remembered with pleasure the happy months that he had spent in Pennsylvania, and wished again to see it. The fact is that he did not renew his courtship of Deborah until the worthless Rogers had left the coast clear by fleeing to the West Indies, and he himself had in a measure been thrown back upon her by rebuffs in other directions. His circuitous proposal after his return to a young relative of Mrs. Godfrey, who with her husband and children occupied a part of his house, was, as described in the *Autobiography* more like a negotiation for a printing

outfit than ordinary wooing. If the love that he brought to this affair had been the only kind of which he was capable, his most ardent biographer, and every biographer seems to adore him more or less in spite of occasional sharp shocks to adoration, might well ask whether his love was not as painfully repellent as his system of morals. The incident would lose some of its hard, homely outlines if clothed in any but the coarse, drab vesture of plain-spoken words with which Franklin clothes it.

Mrs. Godfrey [he says in the *Autobiography*] projected a match for me with a relation's daughter, took opportunities of bringing us often together, till a serious courtship on my part ensu'd, the girl being in herself very deserving. The old folks encourag'd me by continual invitations to supper, and by leaving us together, till at length it was time to explain. Mrs. Godfrey manag'd our little treaty. I let her know that I expected as much money with their daughter as would pay off my remaining debt for the printing house, which I believe was not then above a hundred pounds. She brought me word they had no such sum to spare; I said they might mortgage their house in the loan-office. The answer to this, after some days, was, that they did not approve the match; that, on inquiry of Bradford, they had been informed the printing business was not a profitable one; the types would soon be worn out, and more wanted; that S. Keimer and D. Harry had failed one after the other, and I should probably soon follow them; and, therefore, I was forbidden the house, and the daughter shut up.

Whether this was a real change of sentiment or only artifice, on a supposition of our being too far engaged in affection to retract, and therefore that we should steal a marriage, which would leave them at liberty to give or withhold what they pleas'd, I know not; but I suspected the latter, resented it, and went no more. Mrs. Godfrey brought me afterward some more favorable accounts of their disposition, and would have drawn me on again; but I declared absolutely my resolution to have nothing more to do with that family. This was

resented by the Godfreys; we differ'd, and they removed, leaving me the whole house.

This affair, however, Franklin tells us, turned his thoughts to marriage. He accordingly looked the matrimonial field, or rather market, over, and, to use his own euphemism, made overtures of acquaintance in other places; but he soon found, he further tells us, that, the business of a printer being generally thought a poor one, he was not to expect money with a wife unless with such a one as he should not otherwise think agreeable. Then it was that his heart came back to Deborah, sitting forlorn in the weeds of separation, though not unquestionably in the weeds of widowhood; for it was not entirely certain that Rogers was dead. A friendly intercourse had been maintained all along between Franklin and the members of her family ever since he had first lodged under their roof, and he had often been invited to their home, and had given them sound practical advice. It was natural enough, therefore, that he should pity Miss Read's unfortunate situation (he never calls her Mrs. Rogers), dejected and averse to society as she was, that he should reproach himself with his inconstancy as the cause of her unhappiness, though her mother was good enough to take the whole blame on herself because she had prevented their marriage before he went off to London, and was responsible for the other match, and that compassion and self-accusation should have been gradually succeeded by tenderness and rekindled affection. The result was a marriage as little attended by prudential considerations as any that we could readily imagine; and the words in which Franklin chronicles the event are worthy of exact reproduction:

Our mutual affection was revived, but there were now great objections to our union. The match was indeed looked upon as invalid, a preceding wife being said to be living in England;

but this could not easily be prov'd, because of the distance; and, tho' there was a report of his death, it was not certain. Then, tho' it should be true, he had left many debts, which his successor might be call'd upon to pay. We ventured, however, over all these difficulties, and I took her to wife, September 1st, 1730. None of the inconveniences happened that we had apprehended; she proved a good and faithful helpmate, assisted me much by attending the shop; we throve together, and have ever mutually endeavour'd to make each other happy.

This paragraph from the *Autobiography* does not contain the only tribute paid by Franklin to his wife as a faithful helpmeet. Elsewhere in that work we find this tribute too: "We have an English proverb that says, '*He that would thrive, must ask his wife.*' It was lucky for me that I had one as much dispos'd to industry and frugality as myself. She assisted me chearfully in my business, folding and stitching pamphlets, tending shop, purchasing old linen rags for the paper-makers, etc., etc." His letters are of the same tenor. In one to her after the repeal of the Stamp Act, he wrote, "Had the Trade between the two Countries totally ceas'd, it was a Comfort to me to recollect, that I had once been cloth'd from Head to Foot in Woolen and Linnen of my Wife's Manufacture." Many years after Deborah's death, he used these words in a letter to Miss Alexander: "Frugality is an enriching Virtue; a Virtue I never could acquire in myself; but I was once lucky enough to find it in a Wife, who thereby became a Fortune to me. Do you possess it? If you do, and I were 20 Years younger, I would give your Father 1,000 Guineas for you." And then he adds with the playful humor which came to him as naturally as a carol to the throat of a blithe bird: "I know you would be worth more to me as a Ménnagere, but I am covetous, and love good Bargains." Win an industrious and prudent wife, he declared on another occasion, and, "if she does not

bring a fortune, she will help to *make one.*" And when his daughter Sally married Richard Bache, he wrote to her that she could be as serviceable to her husband in keeping a store, if it was where she dwelt, "as your Mother was to me: For you are not deficient in Capacity, and I hope are not too proud." Sixteen years after his marriage, in a rhyming preface to Poor Richard's *Almanac*, he even penned this grateful jingle:

> "Thanks to kind Readers and a careful Wife,
> With plenty bless'd, I lead an easy Life."

Careful, however, as she had been in her earlier years, Deborah spent enough, as she became older and more accustomed to easy living, to make him feel that he should say a word of caution to her when the news reached him in London that Sally was about to marry a young man who was not only without fortune but soon to be involved in business failure. He advises her not to make an "expensive feasting Wedding," but to conduct everything with the economy required by their circumstances at that time; his partnership with Hall having expired, and his loss of the Post Office not being unlikely. In that event, he said, they would be reduced to their rents and interest on money for a subsistence, which would by no means afford the chargeable housekeeping and entertainments that they had been used to. Though he himself lived as frugally as possible, making no dinners for anybody, and contenting himself with a single dish, when he dined at home, yet such was the dearness of living in London in every article that his expenses amazed him.

I see too [he continued], by the Sums you have received in my Absence, that yours are very great, and I am very sensible that your Situation naturally brings you a great many Visitors, which occasion an Expence not easily to be avoided especially when one has been long in the Practice and Habit of it. If

we were young enough to begin Business again [he remarks a little later in this letter], it might be another Matter,—but I doubt we are past it; and Business not well managed ruins one faster than no Business. In short, with Frugality and prudent Care we may subsist decently on what we have, and leave it entire to our Children:—but without such Care, we shall not be able to keep it together; it will melt away like Butter in the Sunshine; and we may live long enough to feel the miserable Consequences of our Indiscretion.

Eighteen months later, with studied good-feeling, he tells her that, if he does not send her a watch, it will be because the balance on his Post Office account was greatly against him, owing to the large sums that she had received. But Mrs. Franklin was failing, and a few years later, when her memory and other faculties had been enfeebled by paralysis, he found it necessary to give a keener edge to admonition in one of his letters to her. Referring to her disgust with the Messrs. Foxcroft, because they had not supplied her with money to pay for a bill of exchange for thirty pounds, he opened his mind to her with almost cruel bluntness as follows:

That you may not be offended with your Neighbours without Cause; I must acquaint you with what it seems you did not know, that I had limited them in their Payments to you, to the sum of Thirty Pounds per Month, for the sake of our more easily settling, and to prevent Mistakes. This making 360 Pounds a Year, I thought, as you have no House Rent to pay yourself, and receive the Rents of 7 or 8 Houses besides, might be sufficient for the Maintenance of your Family. I judged such a Limitation the more necessary, because you never have sent me any Account of your Expences, and think yourself ill-used if I desire it; and because I know you were not very attentive to Money-matters in your best Days, and I apprehend that your Memory is too much impair'd for the Management of unlimited Sums, without Danger of injuring the future Fortune of your daughter and Grandson.

If out of more than 500 £ a Year, you could have sav'd enough to buy those Bills it might have been well to continue purchasing them. But I do not like your going about among my Friends to borrow Money for that purpose, especially as it is not at all necessary. And therefore I once more request that you would decline buying them for the future. And I hope you will no longer take it amiss of Messrs. Foxcrofts that they did not supply you. If what you receive is really insufficient for your support satisfy me by Accounts that it is so, and I shall order more.

Like an incision in the rind of a beech, which spreads wider and wider with each passing year, is, as a rule, every human failing, as time goes on, and poor Mrs. Franklin, now that senile decay was setting in, seems to have been but another confirmation of this truth. But faithful wife that she was, after the receipt of this letter from her husband, she was scrupulous enough to send him receipts as well as accounts; for in the early part of the succeeding year he writes to her: "I take notice of the considerable Sums you have paid. I would not have you send me any Receipts. I am satisfy'd with the Accounts you give." His letter to her about the Foxcrofts was doubtless not more pointed than the occasion required. In no scales was the salutary medicine of reproof ever weighed more exactly than in his. This letter begins as usual, "My Dear Child," and, after conveying its rebuke, lapses into the old happy, domestic strain. "I am much pleased," he said, "with the little Histories you give me of your fine boy (one of her grandsons) which are confirmed by all that have seen him. I hope he will be spared and continue the same Pleasure and Comfort to you, and that I shall ere long partake with you in it." One instance, perhaps, of inattention to money-matters upon the part of Mrs. Franklin, which helped to produce the climax of this letter, was in the case of a certain Sarah Broughton, who, if we may judge from a single specimen of

her spicy humor, was something of a tartar. On July 1, 1766, she wrote to Franklin that his wife owed her a certain sum of money and also the price of a bed, which she had kept for two years, but now wanted to return, because there had been a decline in the price of feathers. She had written, the writer said, a letter to Mrs. Franklin on the subject, but had received the reply from her "that she did not know me, and that I might write to you she was an hegehog." "Now sir," continued Franklin's correspondent, "I don't think her a hegehog but in reallity she has shot a great many quills at me, but thank Heaven none of them has or can hurt me as I doubt not that your known justice will induce you to order the above sum of seven pounds, seven shillings payed." The keen eye that Mrs. Franklin had in this instance to fluctuations in the market price of an article, which her husband and herself had frequently bought and sold at their shop in the past, shows plainly enough that, even when she was on the eve of her grand climacteric, the thriftier instincts of her early life were not wholly dead. Nor does she seem to have reserved all her quills for obdurate creditors. From the Diary of Daniel Fisher we obtain the following entry:

As I was coming down from my chamber this afternoon a gentlewoman was sitting on one of the lowest stairs which were but narrow, and there not being room enough to pass, she rose up and threw herself upon the floor and sat there. Mr. Soumien and his wife gently entreated her to arise and take a chair, but in vain; she would keep her seat, and kept it, I think, the longer for their entreaty. This gentlewoman, whom though I had seen before I did not know, appeared to be Mrs. Franklin. She assumed the airs of extraordinary freedom and great humility, lamented heavily the misfortunes of those who are unhappily infected with a too tender or benevolent disposition, said she believed all the world claimed a privilege of troubling her Pappy (so she usually calls Mr. Franklin) with their calamities and distresses, giving us a

general history of many such wretches and their impertinent applications to him.

Just what all this meant is not entirely clear. Perhaps it was only real sympathy excited by the harassments to which her husband, whom she devotedly loved, was incessantly subjected by his public activity, his reputation for wise counsel, and his ever-increasing renown. Perhaps it was the mere jealousy of affection inspired by her sense of her own unfitness in point of education and intellectual companionship to be the wife of a man whose doorstep could be so haunted. After this incident the diarist became Franklin's clerk, and lived in his house—a footing which enabled him to give us a truer insight than we should otherwise have had as to the extent to which William Franklin was at one time a festering thorn in the side of Mrs. Franklin.

Mr. Soumien [Fisher diarizes] had often informed me of great uneasiness and dissatisfaction in Mr. Franklin's family in a manner no way pleasing to me, and which in truth I was unwilling to credit, but as Mrs. Franklin and I of late began to be friendly and sociable I discerned too great grounds for Mr. Soumien's reflection, arising solely from the turbulence and jealousy and pride of her disposition. She suspecting Mr. Franklin for having too great an esteem for his son in prejudice of herself and daughter, a young woman of about 12 or 13 years of age, for whom it was visible Mr. Franklin had no less esteem than for his son young Mr. Franklin. I have often seen him pass to and from his father's apartment upon business (for he does not eat, drink or sleep in the house) without the least compliment between Mrs. Franklin and him or any sort of notice taken of each other, till one day as I was sitting with her in the passage when the young gentleman came by she exclaimed to me (he not hearing): "Mr. Fisher, there goes the greatest villain upon earth." This greatly confounded and perplexed me, but did not hinder her from pursuing her invectives in the foulest terms I ever heard from a gentlewoman.

It is pleasant, however, to state that in time Deborah's dislike for William Franklin seems to have considerably abated. In 1767, her husband could write to her, "I am glad you go sometimes to Burlington. The Harmony you mention in our Family and among our Children gives me great Pleasure." And before this letter was written, William Franklin had availed himself of an opportunity to testify his dutiful readiness to extend his protection to her. It was when she had just taken possession of the new house, built by her during her husband's absence in England, and his enemies, availing themselves of the brief unpopularity incurred by him through recommending his friend, John Hughes, as a stamp collector, had aroused the feeling against him in Philadelphia to the point of rendering an attack upon this house not improbable. As soon as William Franklin, then Governor of New Jersey, heard of the danger, to which his father's wife and daughter were exposed, he hastened to Philadelphia to offer them a refuge under his own roof at Burlington. Mrs. Franklin permitted her daughter to accept the offer, but undauntedly refused to accept it herself. This is her own account of the matter to her husband divested of its illiteracy.

I was for nine days [she said] kept in a continual hurry by people to remove, and Sally was persuaded to go to Burlington for safety. Cousin Davenport came and told me that more than twenty people had told him it was his duty to be with me. I said I was pleased to receive civility from anybody; so he staid with me some time; towards night I said he should fetch a gun or two, as we had none. I sent to ask my brother to come and bring his gun also, so we turned one room into a magazine; I ordered some sort of defense upstairs, such as I could manage myself. I said, when I was advised to remove, that I was very sure you had done nothing to hurt anybody, nor had I given any offense to any person at all, nor would I be made uneasy by anybody; nor would I stir or show the

least uneasiness, but if any one came to disturb me I would show a proper resentment. I was told that there were eight hundred men ready to assist any one that should be molested.

Indeed, after his marriage, the correspondence of William Franklin indicates that, if the relations of Mrs. Franklin to him were not altogether what Franklin would fain have had them, that is the relations of Hagar rather than of Sarah, he at least bore himself towards her with a marked degree of respectful consideration. His letters to her were subscribed, "Your ever dutiful son," and, in a letter to his father, he informs him that he and his wife were "on a visit to my mother." When Deborah died, he was the "chief mourner" in the funeral procession, and, in a subsequent letter to his father, he speaks of her as "my poor old mother." After the paralytic stroke, which "greatly affected her memory and understanding," William Franklin expressed the opinion that she should have "some clever body to take care of her," because, he said, she "becomes every day more and more unfit to be left alone." No cleverer body for the purpose, of course, could be found than her own daughter, who came with her husband to reside with and take care of her. In his letter to Franklin announcing her death, William Franklin used these feeling words: "She told me when I took leave of her on my removal to Amboy, that she never expected to see you unless you returned this winter, for that she was sure she should not live till next summer. I heartily wish you had happened to have come over in the fall, as I think her disappointment in that respect preyed a good deal on her spirits." Poor Richard's *Almanac* had sayings, it is hardly necessary to declare, suitable for such an occasion. "There are three faithful friends; an old wife, an old dog, and ready money." "A good wife lost is God's gift lost."

In the light of what we have narrated, it is obvious that there were occasions in Franklin's nuptial life when it was

well that he was a philosopher as well as a husband. "You can bear with your own Faults, and why not a fault in your Wife?," is a question that he is known to have asked at least once, and he did not have to leave his own doorstep to find an application for his injunction, "Keep your eyes wide open before marriage, half shut afterwards." But if there was defect of temper there was never any defect of devotion upon the part of the jealous, high-spirited, courageous wife. It is true that she had no place in the wider sphere of her husband's existence. She did not concern herself even about such a political controversy as that over the Stamp Tax except to say like the leal wife she was that she was sure that her husband had not done anything to hurt anybody.

> You are very prudent [he said to her on one occasion] not to engage in Party Disputes. Women never should meddle with them except in Endeavour to reconcile their Husbands, Brothers, and Friends, who happen to be of contrary Sides. If your Sex can keep cool, you may be a means of cooling ours the sooner, and restoring more speedily that social Harmony among Fellow-Citizens, that is so desirable after long and bitter Dissensions.

Her interest in her husband's electrical studies probably ceased when he wrote to her as follows with reference to the two bells that he had placed in his house in such a position as to ring when an iron rod with which they were connected was electrified by a storm cloud: "If the ringing of the Bells frightens you, tie a Piece of Wire from one Bell to the other, and that will conduct the lightning without ringing or snapping, but silently." She never became equal even to such social standing as her husband acquired for himself by his talents and usefulness in Philadelphia; and she would have been a serious clog upon him in the social circles to which he was admitted in Great Britain and on the Continent, if her aversion to crossing the ocean

had not been insurmountable. Her letters are marked by a degree of illiteracy that make the task of reading them almost like the task of reading an unfamiliar foreign tongue; but it should be recollected that in the eighteenth century in America it was entirely possible for a person to be at once illiterate and a lady. Even Franklin with his *penchant* for simplified spelling must have felt, after meditating some of Deborah's written words, that the orthographical line had to be drawn somewhere. The following letter from her to her husband, dated October ye 29, 1773, and transcribed exactly as written is neither better nor worse than the rest of her epistles to her husband:

My Dear Child:—I have bin verey much distrest aboute you as I did not aney letter nor one word from you nor did I hear one word from oney bodey that you wrote to so I muste submit and inde (?) to submit to what I am to bair I did write by Capt Folkner to you but he is gon down and when I read it over I did not lik t and so if this donte send it I shante like it as I donte send you aney news now I dont go abrode.

I shall tell you what Consernes my selef our youngest Grandson is the foreed child us a live he has had the Small Pox and had it very fine and got a brod a gen. Capt All will tell you aboute him and Benj Franklin Beache, but as it is so difficall to writ I have deserd him to tell you, I have sent a squerel for your friend and wish her better luck it is a very fine one I have had very bad luck they one kild and another run a way all thow they are bred up tame I have not a Caige as I donte know where the man lives that makes them my love to Salley Franklin my love to all our Cusins as thow menshond remember me to Mr. and Mrs. Weste doe you ever hear anything of Ninely Evans as was.[1]

[1] This lady, whose father was Lewis Evans, of Philadelphia, a surveyor and map-maker, was a god-daughter of Deborah, and, according to a letter from Franklin to Deborah, dated July 22, 1774, fell little short of being ubiquitous. He wrote: "She is now again at Tunis, where you will see she has lately lain in of her third Child. Her Father, you know, was a geographer, and his daughter has some connection, I think, with

I thanke you for the silke and hat it at the womons to make it up but have it put up as you wrote (torn) I thonke it it is very prittey; what was the prise? I desier to give my love to everybodey (torn) I shold love Billey was in town 5 or 6 day when the child was in the small pox Mr Franklin (torn) not sene him yit I am to tell a verey pritey thing about Ben the players is cume to town and they am to ackte on Munday he wanted to see a play he unkill Beache had given him a doler his mama asked him wuther he wold give it for a ticket, or buy his Brother a neckles he sed his Brother a necklas he is a charmm child as ever was Borne my Grand cheldren are the Best in the world Sally will write I cante write aney mor I am your a feckshone wife,

D. Franklin.

But, in spite of the qualifications we have stated, there was a place after all, even aside from the joint care of the shop, in which the pair throve so swimmingly together, that Deborah could occupy in the thoughts of a man with such quick, strong affections, such liberality of mind and such a keen interest in the ordinary concerns of life as we find in Franklin. This place becomes manifest enough when we read the letters that passed between the two.

A more considerate, loving wife than these letters show her to have been it would be hard to conceive. Napoleon said of his marshals that only one of them loved him, the others loved the Emperor. The devotion of Deborah to her husband is all the more noteworthy because it appears to have been but slightly, if at all, influenced by his public distinction. Her attachment was to Franklin himself, the early lover with whom she had "interchanged promises" when but a girl, and who, after deserting her for a time, had come back to her in her desolation like day returning to the dark and lonely night, the business comrade to whom her industry and prudence

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the whole Globe; being born herself in America, and having her first Child in Asia, her second in Europe, and now her third in Africa."

had proved in effect a fortune, the most admired and beloved man in the circle of her social relationships, the patient, dutiful, affectionate friend and husband, the father of her daughter and son. Inarticulate as were her struggles with syntax and orthography, she was to him the most faithful of correspondents. Long after she had reached an age when the fond diminutives of early married life are usually exchanged for soberer language, she addressed him in her letters as "My Dear Child," and sometimes as "My Dearest Dear Child." "I am set down to confab a little with my dear child," was the way in which she began one of her letters, "Adue my dear child, and take care of your selef for mamey's sake as well as your one," was the way in which she ended another. So frequently, too, did she write to him when they were separated from each other that he repeatedly acknowledged in his replies her extraordinary constancy as a correspondent; on one occasion writing to her: "I think nobody ever had more faithful Correspondents than I have in Mr. Hughes and you. . . . It is impossible for me to get or keep out of your Debts." When they had been married over twenty-seven years, he thanks her in one of his letters for writing to him so frequently and fully, and, when they had been married nearly forty years, he wrote to her that he thought that she was the most punctual of all his correspondents. And not only did she write often enough to him to elicit these acknowledgments, but her letters afford ample evidence that to lack a letter from him when she expected one was nothing less than a bitter disappointment to her. "I know," he said in a letter to her, "you love to have a Line from me by every Packet, so I write, tho' I have little to say." We have already seen how her failure to hear from, or of, him led her on one occasion to end her plaint with words strong enough to express resignation to the very worst trial to which human life is subject. On another occasion she wrote: "Aprill 7

this day is Cumpleet 5 munthes senes you lefte your one House I did reseve a letter from the Capes senes that not one line I due supose that you did write by the packit but that is not arived yit." The same hunger for everything that related to him, no matter how trivial, finds utterance in her petition in another letter that he *wold* tell her *hough* his poor *armes was* and *hough* he was on his *voiag* and *hough* he *air* and *everey* thing is with him *wich* she wanted *verey* much to know. Nor did her affection limit itself to letters. Whenever he was absent from her and stationary whether at Gnadenhutten, or London, his table was never wanting in something to remind him of home and of the attentive wife whose domestic virtues in spite of her deficiencies of education gave home so much of its meaning.

We have enjoyed your roast beef [he wrote to her from Gnadenhutten] and this day began on the roast veal. All agree that they are both the best that ever were of the kind. Your citizens, that have their dinners hot and hot, know nothing of good eating. We find it in much greater perfection when the kitchen is four score miles from the dining room.

The apples are extremely welcome, and do bravely to eat after our salt pork; the minced pies are not yet come to hand, but I suppose we shall find them among the things expected up from Bethlehem on Tuesday; the capillaire is excellent, but none of us having taken cold as yet, we have only tasted it.

Other letters of his written from Gnadenhutten testify that she missed no opportunity, so long as he was in the wilderness, to send him something better than the salt pork, to which her apples were such a brave sequel, to relieve the harsh privations of camp life for himself and his brother officers. He tells her in one of his letters that all the gentlemen send their compliments. "They drink your health at every meal, having always something on the table to put them in mind of you." Even when the

Atlantic was between them, his life was kept continually refreshed by the same bountiful stream of supplies. A menu, made up of the items that she sent him, might well have softened the heart of even such a rank, swashbuckling enemy of the American Colonies as Dr. Johnson, who loved a good dinner even more than he hated the Americans. Dried venison, bacon, smoked beef, apples, cranberries, nuts, Indian and buckwheat meal, and peaches, dried with and without their skins, are all mentioned in his acknowledgments of her favors. Some of the nuts and apples he presented on one occasion to Lord and Lady Bathurst "a very great lady, the best woman in England," accompanied by a brief note which borrowed the point of its graceful pleasantry from the effort of Great Britain to tax the Colonies without their consent:

"Dr. Franklin presents his respectful compliments to Lord Bathurst, with some American nuts; and to Lady Bathurst, with some American apples; which he prays they will accept as a tribute from that country, small indeed, but *voluntary*."

Franklin's first absence from his wife in England lasted some five years, his second some ten; and such was Deborah's passionate attachment to him that it can scarcely be doubted that, if he had not, during these periods of absence, cheated himself and her from year to year with the idea that his business would soon permit him to return to Philadelphia, she would have joined him despite her aversion to the sea. This aversion was natural enough under the maritime conditions of that time; for even Franklin, whose numerous transatlantic voyages were usually attended by fair weather, and who was an uncommonly resourceful sailor, left behind him the statement that he never crossed the ocean without vowing that he would do so no more.[1] As it was, the frequently

[1] A readable essay might be written upon the sea-voyages of Franklin. The sloop, in which he absconded from Boston, in 1723, was favored with

recurring expectation upon her part that a few months more would restore her husband to his home checked any thought that she may have had of making a voyage to England. There is no evidence that she ever harbored any such intention. An interesting feature of Franklin's life in England in his maturer years is the effort of his friend Strahan to induce Mrs. Franklin to come over to that country with Sally and to take up her permanent residence there with her husband. As to Sally, it began with the half jocular, half serious, proposal from Franklin to

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a fair wind, and reached New York in three days. His voyage from Philadelphia to Boston in 1724 lasted for about a fortnight. The "little vessel," in which he sailed, he tells us in the *Autobiography*, "struck on a shoal in going down the bay, and sprung a leak." "We had," Franklin says, "a blustering time at sea, and were oblig'd to pump almost continually, at which I took my turn." The cabin accommodations and abundant sea stores that fell to the lot of Ralph and himself, under circumstances hereafter mentioned by us, on their voyage from Philadelphia to England in 1724, in the *London-Hope*, Captain Annis, were rare windfalls; but the voyage was marked by a great deal of bad weather. The return voyage of Franklin from London to Philadelphia in 1726, in the *Berkshire*, Captain Clark, including *obiter* delays on the south coast of England, consumed the whole interval between July 21 and Oct. 12. All the incidents of this long voyage were entered in the Journal kept by him while it was under way, and there are few writings in which the ordinary features of an ocean passage at that time are so clearly brought before the reader: the baffling winds, the paralyzing calms; the meagre fare; the deadly *ennui;* and the moody sullenness bred by confinement and monotony. The word "helm-a-lee," Franklin states, became as disagreeable to their ears as the sentence of a judge to a convicted malefactor. Once he leapt overboard and swam around the ship to "wash" himself, and another time he was deterred from "washing" himself by the appearance of a shark, "that mortal enemy to swimmers." For a space his ship was in close enough companionship for several days with another ship for the masters of the two vessels, accompanied by a passenger in each instance, to exchange visits. On his second voyage, of about thirty days, to England, in 1757, the packet, in which he was a passenger, easily outstripped the hostile cruisers by which she was several times chased, but wore about with straining masts just in time to escape shipwreck on the Scilly rocks. Of his return to America in 1762, he wrote to Strahan from Philadelphia: "We had a long Passage near ten Weeks from Portsmouth to this Place, but it was a pleasant one; for we had ten sail in Company and a Man of War to

Strahan, before the former left Pennsylvania for London in 1757, that Sally, then but a mere child, and Strahan's son should make a match of it. "Please to acquaint him," Franklin asked of Strahan on one occasion, after saying that he was glad to hear so good a character of his son-in-law, "that his spouse grows finely and will probably have an agreeable person. That with the best natural disposition in the world, she discovers daily the seeds and tokens of industry, economy, and, in short, of every female virtue, which her parents will endeavour to cultivate for him." Some years later he added that Sally was indeed a very good girl, affectionate, dutiful and industrious, had one of the best hearts, and though not a wit, was, for one of her years, by no means deficient in understanding. Many years later, after time and the cares of motherhood had told on her, a keen observer, Manasseh Cutler, is so ungallant as to speak of this daughter as "a very gross and rather homely lady," but there is evidence that, even if she was never the superbly handsome woman that

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protect us; we had pleasant Weather and fair Winds, and frequently visited and dined from ship to ship." At the end of his third voyage to England in 1764, Franklin wrote to Deborah from the Isle of Wight that no father could have been tenderer to a child than Captain Robinson had been to him. "But we have had terrible Weather, and I have often been thankful that our dear Sally was not with me. Tell our Friends that din'd with us on the Turtle that the kind Prayer they then put up for thirty Days fair Wind for me was favourably heard and answered, we being just 30 Days from Land to Land." Of his return voyage to America in 1775, he wrote to Priestley: "I had a passage of six weeks, the weather constantly so moderate that a London wherry might have accompanied us all the way." His thirty-day voyage to France in 1776 proved a rough and debilitating one to him at his advanced age, but Captain Wickes was not only able to keep his illustrious passenger out of the Tower, but to snatch up two English prizes on his way over. We need say no more than we have already incidentally said in our text of the seven weeks that Franklin gave up to his pen and thermometer on his return voyage to America in 1785. After the passage, he wrote to Mrs. Hewson that it had been a pleasant and not a long one in which there was but one day, a day of violent storm, on which he was glad that she was not with them.

James Parton says she was, yet in the soft bloom of her young womanhood the prediction of her father that she would have an agreeable person was unquestionably fulfilled.

When Franklin passed over to England as the agent of the people of Pennsylvania, Strahan became so fond of him that an earnest effort to fix the whole family in England as a permanent place of residence followed almost as a matter of course, and he not only formally opened up his feelings on the subject to Franklin but indited a letter to Mrs. Franklin which he appears to have believed would prove an irresistible masterpiece of persuasive eloquence. This letter is one of the topics upon which Franklin repeatedly touches in his correspondence with Deborah. In a letter to her of January 14, 1758, he tells her that their friend Strahan had offered to lay him a considerable wager that a letter that Strahan had written would bring her immediately over to England, but that he had told Strahan that he would not pick his pocket, for he was sure that there was no inducement strong enough to prevail with her to cross the seas. Later he wrote to her, "Your Answer to Mr. Strahan was just what it should be. I was much pleas'd with it. He fancy'd his Rhetoric and Art would certainly bring you over." Finding that he was unable himself to persuade Mrs. Franklin to settle down in England, Strahan urged Franklin to try his hand, and the letter in which Franklin reports this fact to his wife makes it apparent enough that Strahan had the matter deeply at heart.

He was very urgent with me [says Franklin] to stay in England and prevail with you to remove hither with Sally. He propos'd several advantageous Schemes to me, which appear'd reasonably founded. His Family is a very agreeable one; Mrs. Strahan a sensible and good Woman, the Children of amiable Characters, and particularly the young Man (who is) sober, ingenious and industrious, and a (desirable)

Person. In Point of Circumstances there can be no Objection; Mr. Strahan being (now) living in a Way as to lay up a Thousand Pounds every Year from the Profits of his Business, after maintaining his Family and paying all Charges. I gave him, however, two Reasons why I could not think of removing hither, One, my Affection to Pennsilvania and long established Friendships and other connections there: The other, your invincible Aversion to crossing the Seas. And without removing hither, I could not think of parting with my Daughter to such a Distance. I thank'd him for the Regard shown us in the Proposal, but gave him no Expectation that I should forward the Letters. So you are at liberty to answer or not, as you think proper. Let me however know your Sentiments. You need not deliver the Letter to Sally, if you do not think it proper.

She did answer, but we are left to infer from a subsequent letter from Franklin to her, in which he alludes to this letter of hers, that, if Strahan was disappointed by his failure to bring about the migration of the Franklins, his disappointment was largely swallowed up in the shock experienced by his literary vanity in finding that his elaborate appeal had not drawn her over. We cannot share his disappointment, whatever it was, when we recollect that to Sally's marriage to Richard Bache we are indebted for more than one descendant of Franklin whose talents and public services have won an honorable place in the history of the nation.

It is gratifying to state that no one can read either Franklin's letters to Deborah or to other persons without feeling unqualifiedly assured that he entertained a sincere and profound affection for the good wife whose heart was for nearly fifty years fastened upon him and his every want with such solicitous tenderness. His married life was distinguished to such an eminent degree by the calm, pure flow of domestic happiness that for that reason, if for no other, we find it impossible to reconcile ourselves

to the protean facility with which, in his old age, he yielded to the seductions of French love-making. The interval, to say the least, is long between the honest apples, which his own good American wife sent him from time to time, when he was in London, and the meretricious apples which Madame Brillon thought that "King John" *i. e.* M. Brillon might be decent enough to offer to some extent to his neighbors when they were all together in Paradise where we shall want for nothing. If one wishes fully to realize how little fettered was the mind of Franklin by local ideals and conventions and how quick it was, like the changeful face of the sea, to mirror all its external relations, one has but to read first Franklin's letters to his wife, as thoroughly Anglo-Saxon as any ever penned in an English manse, and then his letters to Madame Brillon, and the exquisite bagatelle, as thoroughly French as the Abbé Morellet's "Humble Petition presented to Madam Helvétius by her Cats," in which he told Madame Helvétius of the new connection formed by Deborah with M. Helvétius in the Elysian Fields. There is every reason to believe that Franklin's marriage vow was never dishonored during Deborah's life, lax as his conduct was before his marriage and lax as his diction at least was after her death. In the Diary from which we have already quoted quite liberally, Fisher, after narrating the extraordinary manner in which Deborah bewailed the troubles of her "Pappy," observes, "Mr. Franklin's moral character is good, and he and Mrs. Franklin live irreproachably as man and wife." Franklin's loyalty to his wife is also evidenced by a letter from Strahan to Deborah in which he uses these words:

For my own part, I never saw a man who was, in every respect, so perfectly agreeable to me. Some are amiable in one view, some in another, he in all. Now Madam, as I know the ladies here consider him in exactly the same light I do,

upon my word I think you should come over, with all convenient speed, to look after your interest; not but that I think him as faithful to his Joan as any man breathing; but who knows what repeated and strong temptation may in time, and while he is at so great a distance from you, accomplish?

This interrogatory was, perhaps, the rhetorical stroke upon which Strahan relied to give the *coup de grâce* to Mrs. Franklin's abhorrence of the sea. It was certainly calculated to set a jealous-minded wife to thinking. But it seems to have had as little effect upon Deborah as the other artifices of this masterly letter. The terms "his Joan" in it were doubtless suggested by Franklin's song, *My Plain Country Joan*, one verse of which, as good, or rather as bad, as the rest, was as follows:

> "Some faults we have all, and so has my Joan,
> But then they're exceedingly small;
> And, now I am used, they are like my own,
> I scarcely can see 'em at all,
> My dear friends,
> I scarcely can see 'em at all."

Another indication of the marital fidelity of which Strahan speaks is found in a letter from Franklin to Deborah after his second return from England in which he said: "I approve of your opening all my English Letters, as it must give you Pleasure to see that People who knew me there so long and so intimately, retain so sincere a Regard for me." But it would be grossly unjust to Franklin to measure the degree of his attachment to his Joan by the fact merely that he preserved inviolate the nuptial pledge which a man of honor can fairly be expected as a matter of course to observe scrupulously. Not only the lines just quoted by us but the general character of his married life demonstrates that the only thing that he ever regretted about his intercourse with Deborah was that his own

censurable conduct should have made her for a time the wife of anyone but himself.

In his correspondence with his friend Catherine Ray, there are two pleasing references to Deborah.

> Mrs. Franklin [one reads] was very proud, that a young lady should have so much regard for her old husband, as to send him such a present (a cheese). We talk of you every time it comes to table. She is sure you are a sensible girl, and a notable housewife, and talks of bequeathing me to you as a legacy; but I ought to wish you a better, and hope she will live these hundred years; for we are grown old together, and if she has any faults, I am so used to 'em that I don't perceive 'em; as the song says [and then, after quoting from his *Plain Country Joan* the stanza which we have quoted, he adds:]. Indeed, I begin to think she has none, as I think of you. And since she is willing I should love you, as much as you are willing to be loved by me, let us join in wishing the old lady a long life and a happy.

The other reference to Deborah occurs in a letter to Miss Ray, written after Franklin's return from a recent visit to New England, in which he describes his feelings before reaching Philadelphia. "As I drew nearer," he said, "I found the attraction stronger and stronger. My diligence and speed increased with my impatience. I drove on violently, and made such long stretches, that a very few days brought me to my own house, and to the arms of my good old wife and children."

It is to Franklin's own letters to his wife, however, that we must resort to appreciate how fully he reciprocated her affection. Illiterate as her letters were, they were so full of interest to him that he seems to have re-read as well as read them. In one letter to her, for example, after his arrival in England in 1757, he tells her, "I have now gone through all your agreeable letters, which give me fresh pleasure every time I read them." And that he was

quick to feel the dearth of such letters we have testimony in the form of a playful postscript to one of his letters to her of the preceding year when he was at Easton, Pennsylvania. The special messenger, he said, that had been dispatched to Philadelphia with a letter from him to her, as well as letters from other persons to their wives and sweethearts, had returned "without a scrap for poor us."

> The messenger says [he continues] he left the letters at your house, and saw you afterwards at Mr. Duché's, and told you when he would go, and that he lodged at Honey's, next door to you, and yet you did not write; so let Goody Smith (a favorite servant of theirs) give one more just judgment, and say what should be done to you. I think I won't tell you that we are well, nor that we expect to return about the middle of the week, nor will I send you a word of news; that's poz.

The letter ends, "I am your *loving* husband"; and then comes the postscript: "I have *scratched out the loving words*, being writ in haste by mistake, *when I forgot I was angry*."

His letters to her bear all the tokens of conjugal love and of a deep, tranquil domestic spirit. At times, he addresses her as "My Dear Debby," and once as "My Dear Love," but habitually as "My Dear Child." This was the form of address in the first of his published letters to her dated December 27, 1755, and in his last, dated July 22, 1774. "I am, dear girl, your loving husband," "I am, my dear Debby, your ever loving husband," are among the forms of expression with which he concludes. The topics of his letters are almost wholly personal or domestic. They illustrate very strikingly how little dependent upon intellectual congeniality married happiness is, provided that there is a mutual sense of duty, mutual respect and a real community of domestic interests.

In one of his London letters, he informs her that another French translation of his book had just been published, with a print of himself prefixed, which, though a copy of that by Chamberlin, had so French a countenance that she would take him for one of that lively nation. "I think you do not mind such things," he added, "or I would send you one."[1] To politics he rarely refers except to reassure her when uneasiness had been created in her mind by one of the reckless partisan accusations which husbands in public life soon learn to rate at their real value but their wives never do. "I am concern'd that so much Trouble should be given you by idle Reports concerning me," he says on one occasion. "Be satisfied, my dear, that while I have my Senses, and God vouchsafes me this Protection, I shall do nothing unworthy the Character of an honest Man, and one that loves his Family."

As a rule his letters to Deborah have little to say about the larger world in which he moved when he was in England. If he refers to the Royal Family, it is only to mention that the Queen had just been delivered of another Prince, the eighth child, and that there were now six princes and two princesses, all lovely children. After the repeal of the Stamp Act lifted the embargo laid by patriotic Americans on importations of clothing from England, he wrote to Deborah that he was willing that she should have a new gown, and that he had sent her fourteen yards of Pompadour satin. He had told Parliament, he stated, that, before the old clothes of the Americans were worn out, they might have new ones of their own making. "And, indeed," he added, "if they had all as many old Cloathes as your old Man has, that would not be very unlikely,

[1] A copious note on the leading portraits of Franklin will be found in the *Narrative and Critical History of America*, edited by Justin Winsor, vol. vii., p. 37. The best of them resemble each other closely enough to make us feel satisfied that we should recognize him at once, were it possible for us to meet him in life on the street.

for I think you and George reckon'd when I was last at home at least 20 pair of old Breeches." To his own fame and the social attentions which he received from distinguished men abroad he makes only the most meagre allusion.

The agreeable conversation I meet with among men of learning, and the notice taken of me by persons of distinction, are the principal things that soothe me for the present, under this painful absence from my family and friends. Yet those would not keep me here another week, if I had not other inducements; duty to my country, and hopes of being able to do it service.

Thus he wrote to his wife about four months after he arrived in England in 1757. A few weeks later, he said:

I begin to think I shall hardly be able to return before this time twelve months. I am for doing effectually what I came about; and I find it requires both time and patience. You may think, perhaps, that I can find many amusements here to pass the time agreeable. 'Tis true, the regard and friendship I meet with from persons of worth, and the conversation of ingenious men, give me no small pleasure; but at this time of life, domestic comforts afford the most solid satisfaction, and my uneasiness at being absent from my family, and longing desire to be with them, make me often sigh in the midst of cheerful company.[1]

The real interest of Franklin's correspondence with his wife consists in the insight that it gives us into his private, as contrasted with his public, relations. His genius, high

[1] Franklin was frequently the recipient of one of the most delightful of all forms of social attention, an invitation to a country house in the British Islands. On Oct. 5, 1768, he writes to Deborah that he has lately been in the country to spend a few days at friends' houses, and to breathe a little fresh air. On Jan. 28, 1772, after spending some seven weeks in Ireland and some four weeks in Scotland, he tells the same correspondent that he has received abundance of civilities from the gentry of both these kingdoms.

as it rose into the upper air of human endeavor, rested upon a solid sub-structure of ordinary stone and cement, firmly planted in the earth, and this is manifest in his family history as in everything else. The topics, with which he deals in his letters to Deborah, are the usual topics with which a kind, sensible, practical husband and householder, without any elevated aspirations of any kind, deals in his letters to his wife. There was no lack of common ground on which she and he could meet in correspondence after the last fond words addressed by him to her just before he left New York for England in 1757 had been spoken, "God preserve, guard and guide you." First of all, there was his daughter Sally to whom he was lovingly attached. In a letter to his wife, shortly before he used the valedictory words just quoted, he said: "I leave Home, and undertake this long Voyage more chearfully, as I can rely on your Prudence in the Management of my Affairs, and Education of my dear Child; and yet I cannot forbear once more recommending her to you with a Father's tenderest Concern." From this time on, during his two absences in England, Sally seems to have ever been in his thoughts. There are several references to her in one of his earliest letters to Deborah after he reached England in 1757.

I should have read Sally's French letter with more pleasure [he said], but that I thought the French rather too good to be all her own composing. . . . I send her a French Pamela. I hear [he further said] there has a miniature painter gone over to Philadelphia, a relation to John Reynolds. If Sally's picture is not done to your mind by the young man, and the other gentleman is a good hand and follows the business, suppose you get Sally's done by him, and send it to me with your small picture, that I may here get all our little family drawn in one conversation piece.

This idea was not carried out because, among other reasons, as he subsequently informed Deborah, he found

that family pieces were no longer in fashion.[1] In this same letter there is a gentle caress for Sally.

> Had I been well [he said], I intended to have gone round among the shops and bought some pretty things for you and my dear good Sally (whose little hands you say eased your headache) to send by this ship, but I must now defer it to the next, having only got a crimson satin cloak for you, the newest fashion, and the black silk for Sally; but Billy (William Franklin) sends her a scarlet feather, muff, and tippet, and a box of fashionable linen for her dress.

In other letters there are repeated indications of the doting persistency with which his mind dwelt upon his daughter. But the softest touch of all is at the end of one of them. After speaking of the kindness, with which Mrs. Stevenson, Polly Stevenson's mother, had looked after his physical welfare, he adds: "But yet I have a thousand times wish'd you with me, and my little Sally with her ready Hands and Feet to do, and go, and come, and get what I wanted." All these allusions to Sally are found in his letters to Deborah during his first mission to England. But little Sally was growing apace, and, when he returned to England on his second mission in 1764, there was soon to be another person with an equal, if not a superior, claim upon her helpful offices. We have already quoted from his letter to Deborah warning her against "an expensive feasting wedding." In this letter he says of Sally's fiancé, Richard Bache:

> I know very little of the Gentleman or his Character, nor can I at this Distance. I hope his Expectations are not great of any Fortune to be had with our Daughter before our Death. I can only say, that if he proves a good Husband to

[1] Speaking of a portrait of Sally in a letter to Deborah from London in 1758, Franklin says: "I fancy I see more Likeness in her Picture than I did at first, and I look at it often with Pleasure, as at least it reminds me of her."

her, and a good Son to me, he shall find me as good a Father as I can be:—but at present I suppose you would agree with me, that we cannot do more than fit her out handsomely in Cloaths and Furniture, not exceeding in the whole Five Hundred Pounds, of Value. For the rest, they must depend as you and I did, on their own Industry and Care: as what remains in our Hands will be barely sufficient for our Support, and not enough for them when it comes to be divided at our Decease.

Hardly, however, had the betrothal occurred before it was clouded by business reverses which had overtaken the prospective son-in-law. These led to a suggestion from the father that may or may not have been prompted by the thought that a temporary separation might bring about the termination of an engagement marked by gloomy auspices.

In your last letters [he wrote to Deborah], you say nothing concerning Mr. Bache. The Misfortune that has lately happened to his Affairs, tho' it may not lessen his Character as an honest or a Prudent man, will probably induce him to forbear entering hastily into a State that must require a great Addition to his Expence, when he will be less able to supply it. If you think that in the meantime it will be some Amusement to Sally to visit her Friends here (in London) and return with me, I should have no Objection to her coming over with Capt. Falkener, provided Mrs. Falkener comes at the same time as is talk'd of. I think too it might be some Improvement to her.

Poor Richard had incurred considerable risks when he selected his own mate, and, all things considered, he acquiesced gracefully enough in the betrothal of his daughter to a man of whom he knew practically nothing except circumstances that were calculated to bring to his memory many pat proverbs about the folly of imprudent marriages. If, therefore, his idea was to enlist the chilling aid of absence in an effort to bring the engagement to an

end, fault can scarcely be found with him. We know from one of William Franklin's letters that the friends of the family had such misgivings about the union as to excite the anger of Deborah. The suggestion that Sally should be sent over to England did not find favor with her, and in a later letter Franklin writes to her, "I am glad that you find so much reason to be satisfy'd with Mr. Bache. I hope all will prove for the best." And all did prove for the best, as the frequency with which Richard Bache's name occurs in Franklin's will, to say nothing more, sufficiently attests. When the marriage was solemnized, Franklin's strong family affection speedily crowned it with his full approval. In due season, the fact that the contract was a fruitful one is brought to our notice by a letter from him to his wife in which he tells his "Dear Child," then his wife for nearly forty years, that he had written to Sally by Captain Falconer giving her Sir John Pringle's opinion as to the probability of Sally's son having been rendered exempt from the small-pox by inoculation. Thenceforth there is scarcely a letter from the grandfather to the grandmother in which there is not some mention made of this grandson, Benjamin Franklin Bache, the rabid Jeffersonian and editor of after years, whose vituperative editorials in the *Aurora* recall Franklin's statement in the latter part of his life that the liberty of the press ought to be attended by the ancient liberty of the cudgel. "I am glad your little Grandson," says one letter, "recovered so soon of his Illness, as I see you are quite in Love with him, and your Happiness wrapt up in his; since your whole long Letter is made up of the History of his pretty Actions." In a subsequent letter to Deborah, he passes to the boy's father, who had come over to England, where his mother and sisters resided, and was on the point of returning to Philadelphia. "Mr. Bache is about returning. His Behaviour here has been very agreeable to me. I have

advis'd him to settle down to Business in Philadelphia, where I hope he will meet with Success. I mentioned to you before, that I saw his Mother and Sisters at Preston, who are genteel People, and extreamly agreeable." In the same letter, he tells Deborah that he has advised Bache to deal in the ready money way though he should sell less.

He may keep his Store [he said] in your little North Room for the present. And as he will be at no expence while the Family continues with you, I think he may, with Industry and Frugality, get so forward, as at the end of his Term, to pay his Debts and be clear of the World, which I much wish to see. I have given him £200 Sterl'g to add something to his Cargo.

It is not long before he is writing to Deborah about "Sister Bache and her amiable Daughters." Like the commerce of material gifts, which his wife and himself kept up with each other, when separated, are the details about his godson, William Hewson, the son of his friend Polly, which he exchanges with Deborah for details about his grandson, who came to be known, it seems, as "the Little King Bird," and the "Young Hercules."

In Return for your History of your *Grandson* [he wrote to her on one occasion], I must give you a little of the History of my *Godson*. He is now 21 Months old, very strong and healthy, begins to speak a little, and even to sing. He was with us a few Days last Week, grew fond of me, and would not be contented to sit down to Breakfast without coming to call *Pa*, rejoicing when he had got me into my Place. When seeing me one Day crack one of the Philada Biscuits into my Tea with the Nut-crackers, he took another and try'd to do the same with the Tea-Tongs. It makes me long to be at home to play with Ben.

Indeed, by this time, Franklin had become such a fatuous grandfather that he ceases to call his grandson

Ben and speaks of him as "Benny Boy" when he does not speak of him as "the dear boy."

In the fulness of time, Richard and Sally Bache were destined to be the parents of numerous children. When Franklin returned from his mission to France, the youngest of them soon became as devoted to him as had been Billy Hewson, or the youthful son of John Jay, whose singular attachment to him is referred to in one of his letters to Jay. In the same description, in which Manasseh Cutler speaks in such sour terms of the person of Mrs. Bache, he tells us that, when he saw her at Franklin's home in Philadelphia, she had three of her children about her, over whom she seemed to have no kind of command, but who appeared to be excessively fond of their grandpapa. Indeed, all children who were brought into close companionship with Franklin loved him, and instinctively turned to him for responsive love and sympathy. Men may be the best judges of the human intellect, but children are the best judges of the human heart.

Francis Folger, the only legitimate child of Franklin except Sally, is not mentioned in his correspondence with his wife. The colorless Franky who is was not this child. Franklin's son was born a year after the marriage of Franklin and Deborah in 1730, and died, when a little more than four years of age, and therefore long before the date of the earliest letter extant from Franklin to Deborah. Though warned but a few years previously by an epidemic of smallpox in Philadelphia, which had been accompanied by a high rate of mortality, Franklin could not make up his mind to subject the child to the hazards of inoculation. The consequence was that, when a second epidemic visited the city, Francis contracted the disease, and died. Franklin, to use his own words to his sister Jane Mecom, long regretted him bitterly, and also regretted that he had not given him the disease by inoculation.

All, who have seen my grandson [he said in another letter to his sister] agree with you in their accounts of his being an uncommonly fine boy, which brings often afresh to my mind the idea of my son Franky, though now dead thirty-six years, whom I have seldom since seen equaled in every thing, and whom to this day I cannot think of without a sigh.

But Sally and his grandson were far from being the only persons who furnished material for Franklin's letters to his wife. These letters also bring before us in many ways other persons connected with him and Deborah by ties of blood, service or friendship. He repeatedly sends his "duty" to his mother-in-law, Mrs. Read, and when he is informed of the death of "our good mother," as he calls her, he observes, "'Tis, I am sure, a Satisfaction to me, that I cannot charge myself with having ever fail'd in one Instance of Duty and Respect to her during the many Years that she call'd me Son." "My love to Brother John Read and Sister, and cousin Debbey, and young cousin Johnny Read, and let them all know, that I sympathize with them all affectionately," was his message to her relations in the same letter.

Some of his letters conveyed much agreeable information to Deborah about his and her English relations. Of these we shall have something to say in another connection.

"Billy," William Franklin, is mentioned in his father's letters to Deborah on many other occasions than those already cited by us; for he was his father's intimate companion during the whole of the first mission to England. He appears to have truly loved his sister, Sally, and is often mentioned in Franklin's letters to Deborah as sending Sally his love or timely gifts. If he really presented his duty to his mother half as often as Franklin reported, she had no cause to complain of his lack of attention. That her earlier feelings about him had undergone a decided change, before he went to England with his

father, we may infer from one of Franklin's letters in which, in response to her "particular inquiry," he tells her that "Billy is of the Middle Temple, and will be call'd to the Bar either this Term or the next." Some seven years later, he tells her that it gave him pleasure to hear from Major Small that he had left her and Sally and "our other children" well also.

Mention of Peter, his negro servant, is also several times made in Franklin's letters to Deborah. In one letter, written when he was convalescing after a severe attack of illness, he tells Deborah that not only had his good doctor, Doctor Fothergill, attended him very carefully and affectionately, and Mrs. Stevenson nursed him kindly, but that Billy was of great service to him, and Peter very diligent and attentive. But a later letter does not give quite so favorable a view of Peter, after the latter had inhaled a little longer the free air of England.

> Peter continues with me [said Franklin] and behaves as well as I can expect, in a Country where they are many Occasions of spoiling servants, if they are ever so good. He has a few Faults as most of them, and I see with only one Eye, and hear only with one Ear; so we rub on pretty comfortably.

These words smack of the uxorious policy recommended to husbands by Poor Richard. The same letter gives us a glimpse of another negro servant, who was even more strongly disposed than Peter to act upon the statement in Cowper's *Task* that slaves cannot breathe in England.

> King, that you enquire after [says Franklin], is not with us. He ran away from our House, near two Years ago, while we were absent in the Country; But was soon found in Suffolk, where he had been taken in the Service of a Lady, that was very fond of the Merit of making him a Christian, and contributing to his Education and Improvement. As he was of little Use, and often in Mischief, Billy consented to her keeping

him while we stay in England. So the Lady sent him to School, has taught him to read and write, to play on the Violin and French Horn, with some other Accomplishments more useful in a Servant. Whether she will finally be willing to part with him, or persuade Billy to sell him to her, I know not. In the meantime he is no Expence to us.

And that was certainly something worth noting about a servant who could play upon the French horn.

But it is of Goody Smith, the servant in the Franklin household at Philadelphia, whose judgment was invoked upon the failure of Deborah to answer her husband's letter from Easton, that mention is most often made in the portions of Franklin's letters to his wife which relate to servants. In a letter to Deborah from Easton, he expresses his obligations to Goody Smith for remembering him and sends his love to her. In another letter to Deborah, when he was on his way to Williamsburg in Virginia, he says, "my Duty to Mother, and love to Sally, Debby, Gracey, &c., not forgetting the Goodey." Subsequently, when in England, he tells Deborah:

I have order'd two large print Common Prayer Books to be bound on purpose for you and Goodey Smith; and that the largeness of the Print may not make them too bulkey, the Christnings, Matrimonies, and everything else that you and she have not immediate and constant Occasion for, are to be omitted. So you will both of you be repriev'd from the Use of Spectacles in Church a little longer.

In another letter from England, Franklin mentions that he sends Deborah a pair of garters knit by Polly Stevenson who had also favored him with a pair. "Goody Smith may, if she pleases," he adds, "make such for me hereafter, and they will suit her own fat Knees. My Love to her." And love to her he sends again when he hears that she is recovering from an illness. Franklin

likewise refers several times in his letters to Deborah to another servant, John, who accompanied him on his return to England in 1764, but the behavior of this servant seems to have been too unexceptionable for him to be a conspicuous figure in his master's letters. They were evidently a kind master and mistress, Franklin and Deborah. "I am sorry for the death of your black boy," he wrote to her on one occasion from London, "as you seem to have had a regard for him. You must have suffered a good deal in the fatigue of nursing him in such a distemper."

Over and over again in his letters to Deborah, Franklin approves himself a "lover of his friends" like his friend Robert Grace. He sends his love to them individually, and he sends his love to them collectively. Even during a brief absence, as when he was off on his military expedition, his letters to Deborah are sprinkled with such messages as "our Compliments to Mrs. Masters and all enquiring Friends," "My Love to Mr. Hall" (his business partner), "Give my hearty Love to all Friends," "Love to all our friends and neighbours." During another brief absence in Virginia, he sends his respects to "Mrs. Masters and all the Officers and in short to all Philadelphia." In a later letter to Deborah, written from Utrecht, the form of his concluding words on the previous occasion is made still more comprehensive. "My Love," he said, "to my dear Sally, and affectionate Regards to-all Pennsylvania." In one of his letters from England, he wrote, "Pray remember me kindly to all that love us, and to all that we love. 'Tis endless to name names," and on still another occasion, in asking Deborah to thank all his friends for their favors, which contributed so much to the comfort of his voyage, he added, "I have not time to name Names: You know whom I love and honour." He had such troops of friends that he might well shrink from the weariness of naming them all. Indeed, he

scarcely writes a letter to Deborah that does not bear witness to the extent and warmth of his friendships. When he left Philadelphia for England in 1757, about a dozen of his friends accompanied him as far as Trenton, but, in the letter to Deborah which informs us of this fact, he does not give us the names of any of them. This letter was written from Trenton. Mrs. Grace and "Dear Precious Mrs. Shewell," Mrs. Masters, "Mrs. Galloway & Miss," Mrs. Redman, Mrs. Graeme, Mrs. Thomson, Mrs. Story, Mrs. Bartram, Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Hilborne all come in at one time, as well as other ladies whom he does not name, for his best respects, in return for friendly wishes that they had transmitted to him through Deborah. In another letter he sends his love to "our dear precious Polly Hunt and all our kind inquiring friends." Friends escorted him to Trenton when he was on his way to England in 1757, friends bestowed all sorts of gifts on him to render his voyage comfortable, Mr. Thomas Wharton even lending him a woollen gown which he found a comfortable companion in his winter passage; friends did him the honor to drink his health in the unfinished kitchen of the new house built in his absence; and friends "honored" the dining-room in this home "with their Company." When he heard of the convivial gathering in the unfinished kitchen, he wrote to Deborah, "I hope soon to drink with them in the Parlour," but there is a tinge of dissatisfaction in his observations to Deborah on the gathering in the dining-room.

It gives me Pleasure [he said] that so many of my Friends honour'd our new Dining Room with their Company. You tell me only of a Fault they found with the House, that it was too little, and not a Word of anything they lik'd in it: Nor how the Kitchen Chimneys perform; so I suppose you spare me some Mortification, which [he adds with a slight inflection of sarcasm] is kind.

His dear friend, Mr. Rhodes, Mr. Wharton, Mr. Roberts, Mr. and Mrs. Duffield, Neighbor Thomson, Dr. and Mrs. Redman, Mrs. Hopkinson, Mr. Duché, Dr. Morgan and Mr. Hopkinson are other friends mentioned in a later letter of his to Deborah. In the same letter, he rejoices that his "good old Friend, Mr. Coleman, is got safe home, and continues well." Coleman, as we shall see, was one of the two friends who had come to his aid in his early manhood when he was sued and threatened with ruin by his creditors. The death of the dear, amiable Miss Ross, "our Friend Bond's heavy loss," the disorder that had befallen "our friend Kinnersley" and other kindred facts awaken his ready sympathy; presents of books, seeds and the like, as well as messages of love and respect, remind his friends how freshly green his memory of them is.

The letters have much to say, too, about the presents to Deborah and Sally which were almost incessantly crossing the outflowing currents of apples and buckwheat meal from Philadelphia. These presents are far too numerous to be all specified by us, but some perhaps it may not be amiss to recall. In one letter, he writes to Deborah that he is sending her a large case marked D. F. No. 1 and a small box marked D. F. No. 2, and that in the large case is another small box containing some English china, viz.: melons and leaves for a dessert of fruit and cream, or the like; a bowl remarkable for the neatness of the figures, made at Bow near London, some coffee cups of the same make, and a Worcester bowl, ordinary. In the same box, to show the difference of workmanship, he said, there was something from all the china works in England and one old true china basin mended of an odd color, four silver salt ladles, newest but ugliest fashion, a little instrument to core apples, another to make little turnips out of great ones and six coarse diaper breakfast cloths. The latter, he stated,

were to be spread on the tea table, for nobody breakfasted in London on the naked table but on the cloth set a large tea board with the cups. In the large case were likewise some carpeting for a best room floor, and bordering to go along with it, also two large fine Flanders bed-ticks, two pair of large superfine fine blankets, two fine damask table-cloths and napkins, and forty-three ells of Ghentish sheeting Holland, all of which Deborah had ordered of him; also fifty-six yards of cotton, printed curiously from copper plates, a new invention, to make bed and window curtains, and seven yards of chair bottoms printed in the same way very neat. "These were my Fancy," Franklin remarks, "but Mrs. Stevenson tells me I did wrong not to buy both of the same Colour." In the large case, too, were seven yards of printed cotton, blue ground, to make Deborah a gown.

I bought it by Candlelight, and lik'd it then [the letter said], but not so well afterwards. If you do not fancy it, send it as a Present from me to sister Jenny. There is a better Gown for you, of flower'd Tissue, 16 yards, of Mrs. Stevenson's Fancy, cost 9 Guineas; and I think it a great Beauty. There was no more of the Sort, or you should have had enough for a *Negligee* or Suit.

There is also Snuffers, Snuff Stand, and Extinguisher of Steel, which I send for the Beauty of the Work. The Extinguisher is for Spermaceti Candles only, and is of a new Contrivance, to preserve the Snuff upon the Candle.

Small box No. 2 contained cut table glass of several sorts. After stating its contents, Franklin adds, "I am about buying a compleat Set of Table China, 2 Cases of silver handled Knives and Forks, and 2 pair Silver Candlesticks; but these shall keep to use here till my Return, as I am obliged sometimes to entertain polite Company."

But there is nothing in this letter equal in interest to

the paragraph that brings to our mental eye the handsome, buxom figure of Deborah herself.

I forgot to mention another of my Fancyings, *viz.*: a Pair of Silk Blankets, very fine. They are of a new kind, were just taken in a French Prize, and such were never seen in England before: they are called Blankets, but I think will be very neat to cover a Summer Bed, instead of a Quilt or Counterpain. I had no Choice, so you will excuse the Soil on some of the Folds; your Neighbour Forster can get it off. I also forgot, among the China, to mention a large fine Jugg for Beer, to stand in the Cooler. I fell in Love with it at first Sight; for I thought it look'd like a fat jolly Dame, clean and tidy, with a neat blue and white Calico Gown on, good natur'd and lovely, and put me, in mind of—Somebody. It has the Coffee Cups in its Belly,[1] pack'd in best Chrystal Salt, of a peculiar nice Flavour, for the Table, not to be powder'd.

The receipt of such a case and box as these was doubtless an event long remembered in the Franklin home at Philadelphia. In a subsequent letter from Franklin to Deborah, the following gifts to Sally are brought to our attention:

By Capt. Lutwidge I sent my dear Girl a newest fashion'd white Hat and Cloak, and sundry little things, which I hope

[1] The only blot upon the useful labors of Jared Sparks, as the editor of Franklin's productions, is the liberties that he took with their wording. Sometimes his alterations were the offspring of good feeling, sometimes of ordinary puristic scruples, and occasionally of the sickly prudery which led our American grandfathers and grandmothers to speak of the leg of a turkey as its "drum-stick." The word "belly" appears to have been especially trying to his nice sense of propriety. One result was these scornful strictures by Albert Henry Smyth in the Introduction to his edition of Franklin's writings: "He is nice in his use of moral epithets; he will not offend one stomach with his choice of words. Franklin speaks of the Scots 'who entered England and *trampled on its belly* as far as Derby,' —'marched on,' says Sparks. Franklin is sending some household articles from London to Philadelphia. In the large packing case is 'a jug for beer.' It has, he says, 'the coffee cups in its belly.' Sparks performs the same abdominal operation here."

will get safe to hand. I now send her a pair of Buckles, made of French Paste Stones, which are next in Lustre to Diamonds. They cost three Guineas, and are said to be cheap at that Price.

These were but a few of the many gifts that Deborah and Sally received from Franklin, when he was in London. In their relations to their own households, philosophers are frequently not unlike the ancient one, who, when told by a messenger that his house was on fire, looked up for a minute from his task to say impatiently that his wife attended to all his domestic affairs. This is not true of Franklin, who was wholly free from the crass ignorance and maladroit touch which render many husbands as much out of place in their own houses as the officious ass in Æsop's fable was in his master's dining-hall. Even the fences, the well and the vegetable garden at times are mentioned in his letters to Deborah, and his mechanical skill stood him in good stead as a householder. He knew how the carpets should be laid down, what stuff should be purchased for curtains in the blue chamber, and by what kind of hooks they should be fastened to the curtain rails, and the number of curtains at each window that the London fashions required. In one letter he gives Deborah minute instructions as to how the blue room in his Philadelphia home was to be painted and papered. In a subsequent letter, after saying that he was glad to hear that certain pictures were safe arrived at Philadelphia, he adds, "You do not tell me who mounted the great one, nor where you have hung it up."

In his relations to his home, at any rate, we can discern nothing of the lack of order, with which he was so frank in reproaching himself. During the time that he was detained in New York by Lord Loudon, he several times had occasion to send a message to his wife about something that he had left behind in his house at Philadelphia, or in his house at Woodbridge in New Jersey, and nothing

could be more exact than his recollection as to just where each thing was. He writes for his best spectacles; he had left them on the table, he said, meaning at Woodbridge. In the right hand little drawer under his desk in Philadelphia was some of the Indian Lady's gut-cambric; it was to be rolled up like a ribbon, wrapt in paper and placed in the Indian seal skin hussiff, with the other things already in it, and the hussiff was to be forwarded to him. It would be an acceptable present to a gimcrack great man in London that was his friend. In certain places on his book-shelves at Woodbridge, which he precisely locates, were the *Gardener's Dictionary*, by P. Miller, and the *Treatise on Cydermaking*. They were to be delivered to Mr. Parker.

Occasional shadows, of course, fall across the happy and honored life reflected in Franklin's letters to Deborah. We cannot have the evening, however soft and still, without its fading light; or, as Franklin himself put it in one of these letters, "we are not to expect it will be always Sunshine." Strenuous and absorbing as were his public tasks during each of his missions to England; signalized as the latter were by the honors conferred on him by ancient seats of learning, and the attentions paid him by illustrious men; charming and refreshing as were his excursions for health and recreation about the British Islands and on the Continent, and his hours of social relaxation in the country houses of England, Scotland and Ireland; supplied as he was at No. 7 Craven Street with every domestic comfort that the assiduous management of Mrs. Stevenson—who even took care that his shirts should be well-aired as Deborah directed—could provide, his thoughts, now and then, as we have seen, tristfully reverted to his home on the other side of the Atlantic. Some six months after his arrival in England in 1757, he expressed the hope that, if he stayed another winter, it would be more agreeable than the greatest part of the time

that he had spent in England. Some two months after his return to England in 1764, he writes to Deborah that he hopes that a few months—the few months slid into ten years—will finish affairs in England to his wish, and bring him to that retirement and repose, with his little family, so suitable to his years, and which he has so long set his heart upon. Some four years later, he wrote to Deborah:

I feel stronger and more active. Yet I would not have you think that I fancy I shall grow young again. I know that men of my Bulk often fail suddenly: I know that according to the Course of Nature I cannot at most continue much longer, and that the living even of another Day is uncertain. I therefore now form no Schemes, but such as are of immediate Execution; indulging myself in no future Prospect except one, that of returning to Philadelphia, there to spend the Evening of Life with my Friends and Family.

There was a time when he loved England and would perhaps have contentedly lived and died there, if his Lares and Penates could have been enticed into taking up their abode there. With his broad, tolerant, jocund nature, he was, it must be confessed, not a little like a hare, which soon makes a form for itself wherever it happens to crouch. The homesickness, which colors a few of his letters, is to no little extent the legacy of illness. But much as he was absent from home, alchemist as he always was in transmuting all that is disagreeable in life into what is agreeable, or at least endurable, the family hearthside never ceased to have a bright, cheerful glow for his well-ordered, home-loving nature.

Grave illness was more than once his lot during his mission to England.[1] Shortly after his arrival in that

[1] The maladies to which Franklin was subject, and the spells of illness that he experienced, like everything else relating to him, have been described in detail by at least one of his enthusiastic latter-day biographers.

country in 1757, he was seized with a violent attack of sickness, accompanied by delirium, which left him in an invalid condition for quite a time. From the account that he gives of the cupping, vomiting and purging that he underwent, under the care of good Doctor Fothergill, there would seem to have been no lack of opportunity for the escape of the disease, which, judging by the amount of bark that he took in substance and infusion, was probably some form of malarial fever. This attack gives a decidedly valetudinary tone to one of his subsequent letters to Deborah. "I am much more tender than I us'd to be," he said, "and sleep in a short Callico Bedgown with close Sleeves, and Flannel close-footed Trousers; for without them I get no warmth all Night. So it seems I grow older apace." Deborah's health, too, about this time was not overgood, for, a few months later, he writes to her: "It gives me Concern to receive such frequent Acc^{t}s of your being indisposed; but we both of us grow in Years, and must expect our Constitutions, though tolerably good in themselves, will by degrees give way to the Infirmities of Age." Shortly after Franklin's arrival in England in 1764, he was seized with another attack of illness, but he was soon able to declare that, thanks to God, he was got perfectly well, his cough being quite gone, and his arms mending, so that he could dress and undress himself, if he chose to endure a little pain. A few months later, he says it rejoices him to learn that Deborah is freer than she used to be from the headache and the pain in her side. He himself, he said, was likewise in perfect health. Again he writes to Deborah in the succeeding year: "I congratulate you on the soon expected Repeal of the Stamp Act; and on the great Share of Health we both enjoy, tho' now going in Fourscore (that is, in the fourth score)."

We are content, however, to be classed among those biographers in whose eyes no amount of genius can hallow an ague or glorify a cutaneous affection.

He was not allowed, however, to indulge long the spirit of congratulation, for, a few months later, one of his letters to Deborah brings to our knowledge the fact that he had been very ill. After his recovery from this illness, he does not seem to have been attacked by anything again while in England, beyond a fit or so of the gout, and in 1768 he readily assents to the statement of Deborah that they were both blessed with a great share of health considering their years, then sixty-three. A few years more, however, and Franklin's correspondence indicates plainly enough that this statement was no longer applicable to Deborah. In the letter last-mentioned, her husband writes to her that he wonders to hear that his friends were backward in bringing her his letters when they arrived, and thinks it must be a mere imagination of hers, the effect of some melancholy humor she happened then to be in; and some four years afterwards he recommends to her a dietary for the preservation of her health and the improvement of her spirits. But both were then beyond repair, and, two years later, she was in the Elysian fields where, despite what was reported, as we shall see, by Franklin to Madame Helvétius about his Eurydice and M. Helvétius, it is impossible to believe that she, faithful, loving creature that she was, did anything but inconsolably await his coming.

Of course, we are not wholly dependent upon Franklin's letters to Deborah for details relating to Sally and Richard Bache. A very readable letter of his is the one written by him to Sally from Reedy Island on his way to England in 1764. Its opening sentences bring home to us anew the multitude of his friends and the fervid enthusiasm of their friendship.

Our good friends, Mr. Galloway, Mr. Wharton, and Mr. James, came with me in the ship from Chester to New Castle and went ashore there [he said]. It was kind to favour me with their good company as far as they could. The affection-

ate leave taken of me by so many friends at Chester was very endearing. God bless them and all Pennsylvania.

Then, after observing that the natural prudence and goodness of heart, with which God had blessed Sally, made it less necessary for him to be particular in giving her advice, Franklin tells her that the more attentively dutiful and tender she was towards her good mama the more she would recommend herself to him, adding, "But why should I mention *me*, when you have so much higher a promise in the commandments, that such conduct will recommend you to the favour of God." After this, he warns her that her conduct should be all the more circumspect, that no advantage might be given to the malevolence of his political enemies, directs her to go constantly to church and advises her in his absence to acquire those useful accomplishments, arithmetic and book-keeping.

In his next letter to Sally, he tells her that he has met her husband at Preston, where he had been kindly entertained for two or three days by her husband's mother and sisters, whom he liked much. The comfort that this assurance gave to a wife, who had never met her husband's relatives, can be readily appreciated. He had advised Bache, he said, to settle down to business in Philadelphia, where he would always be with her; almost any profession a man has been educated in being preferable, in his opinion, to an office held at pleasure, as rendering him more independent, more a freeman, and less subject to the caprices of superiors. This means, of course, that the Baches, too, were looking for a seat in the Post-Office carryall, in which room was found for so many of Franklin's relations and *protégés*.

By Industry & Frugality [Franklin further said], you may get forward in the World, being both of you yet young. And then what we may leave you at our Death may be a pretty

Addition, tho' of itself far from sufficient to maintain & bring up a Family. It is of the more Importance for you to think seriously of this, as you may have a Number of Children to educate. 'Till my Return you need be at no Expence for Rent, etc, as you are all welcome to continue with your Mother, and indeed it seems to be your Duty to attend her, as she grows infirm, and takes much Delight in your Company and the Child's. This Saving will be a Help in your Progress: And for your Encouragement I can assure you that there is scarce a Merchant of Opulence in your Town, whom I do not remember a young Beginner with as little to go on with, & no better Prospects than Mr. Bache.

Ben of course is not overlooked. "I am much pleas'd with the Acc[t] I receive from all Hands of your dear little Boy. I hope he will be continu'd a Blessing to us all." It must have been a great gratification to him to learn that Betsey, William Franklin's wife, as well as Deborah, had stood as godmother for the child. In his next letter to Sally, acknowledging the receipt of a pleasing letter from her, he states that he is glad that she has undertaken the care of the housekeeping, as it would be an ease to her mother, especially if she could manage to her approbation. "*That,*" he commented significantly, "may perhaps be at first a Difficulty."[1] It would be of use to her, he continued, if she would get a habit of keeping exact accounts, and it would be some satisfaction to him to see them, for she should remember, for her encouragement in good economy, that, whatever a child saves of its parents' money, will be its own another day. "Study," the letter concludes, "Poor Richard a little, and you may

[1] "I must mention to you," Sally said in a letter to her father, dated Oct. 30, 1773, "that I am no longer housekeeper; it gave my dear mama so much uneasiness, and the money was given to me in a manner which made it impossible to save anything by laying in things beforehand, so that my housekeeping answered no good purpose, and I have the more readily given it up, though I think it my duty, and would willingly take the care and trouble off of her, could I possibly please and make her happy."

find some Benefit from his Instructions." These letters were all written from London. The rest of Franklin's letters to Sally alone were written from Passy. In the first he says that, if she knew how happy her letters made him, and considered how many of them miscarried, she would, he thought, write oftener. A daughter had then been added to the members of the Bache household, and that he had a word to pen about her goes almost without saying. He expresses the hope that Sally would again be out of the city during the hot months for the sake of this child's health, "for I begin to love the dear little creature from your description of her," he said. This was the letter in which Sally was so pointedly scored for not living more simply and frugally.

I was charmed [he declared] with the account you gave me of your industry, the table cloths of your own spinning, &c.; but the latter part of the paragraph, that you had sent for linen from France, because weaving and flax were grown dear, alas, that dissolved the charm; and your sending for long black pins, and lace, and *feathers!* disgusted me as much as if you had put salt into my strawberries. The spinning, I see, is laid aside, and you are to be dressed for the ball! You seem not to know, my dear daughter, that, of all the dear things in this world, idleness is the dearest, except mischief.

Then Ben as usual comes in for notice. As he intended him for a Presbyterian as well as a Republican, he had sent him to finish his education at Geneva, Franklin stated.

He is much grown [he continues] in very good health, draws a little, as you will see by the enclosed, learns Latin, writing, arithmetic, and dancing, and speaks French better than English. He made a translation of your last letter to him, so that some of your works may now appear in a foreign language.

A few sentences more, with regard to her second son, Will, and another topic and there is a regurgitation of his disgust over Sally's extravagance.

When I began [he said] to read your account of the high prices of goods, "a pair of gloves, $7; a yard of common gauze, $24, and that it now required a fortune to maintain a family in a very plain way," I expected you would conclude with telling me, that everybody as well as yourself was grown frugal and industrious; and I could scarce believe my eyes in reading forward, that "there never was so much pleasure and dressing going on," and that you yourself wanted black pins and feathers from France to appear, I suppose, in the mode! This leads me to imagine, that it is perhaps not so much that the goods are grown dear, as that the money is grown cheap, as everything else will do when excessively plenty; and that people are still as easy nearly in their circumstances, as when a pair of gloves might be had for half a crown. The war indeed may in some degree raise the prices of goods, and the high taxes which are necessary to support the war may make our frugality necessary; and, as I am always preaching that doctrine, I cannot in conscience or in decency encourage the contrary, by my example, in furnishing my children with foolish modes and luxuries. I therefore send all the articles you desire, that are useful and necessary, and omit the rest; for, as you say you should "have great pride in wearing anything I send, and showing it as your father's taste," I must avoid giving you an opportunity of doing that with either lace or feathers. If you wear your cambric ruffles as I do, and take care not to mend the holes, they will come in time to be lace, and feathers, my dear girl, may be had in America from every cock's tail.

Franklin's last letter to Sally was written from Passy, and contains the inimitable strictures on the Order of the Cincinnati, to which we shall hereafter return, but nothing of any personal or domestic interest.

Two of the letters of Franklin are written to Sally and her husband together. "Dear Son and Daughter," is

the way he begins, and one ends, "I am ever my dear Children, your affectionate Father."

Both of these letters were written from Passy. One of them, in addition to letting the parents know that Ben promised to be a stout, as well as a good, man, presents with no little pathos the situation of the writer on the eve of his departure from France for Philadelphia in 1785. After mentioning his efforts to engage some good vessel bound directly for Philadelphia, which would agree to take him on board at Havre with his grandsons, servants and baggage, he sketches this lugubrious picture of himself.

> Infirm as I am, I have need of comfortable Room and Accommodations. I was miserably lodg'd in coming over hither, which almost demolish'd me. I must be better stow'd now, or I shall not be able to hold out the Voyage. Indeed my Friends here are so apprehensive for me, that they press me much to remain in France, and three of them have offer'd me an Asylum in their Habitations. They tell me I am here among a People who universally esteem and love me; that my Friends at home are diminish'd by Death in my Absence; that I may there meet with Envy and its consequent Enmity which here I am perfectly free from; this supposing I live to compleat the Voyage, but of that they doubt. The Desire however of spending the little Remainder of Life with my Family, is so strong, as to determine me to try, at least, whether I can bear the Motion of a Ship. If not, I must get them to set me on shore somewhere in the Channel, and content myself to die in Europe.

This is melancholy enough, but the wonderful old man weathered out the voyage, and contrived on the way to write three elaborate treatises on practical subjects which, good as they are of their kind, the general reader would gladly exchange for the addition of a few dozen pages to the *Autobiography*. In his last years, he was like the mimosa tree, dying, to all appearances, one year, and

the next throwing out fresh verdurous branches from his decaying trunk.

Among the writings of Franklin are also letters to Richard Bache alone. The first is dated October 7, 1772, and begins, "Loving Son." But loving son as Bache was, Franklin was too indisposed to encourage pecuniary laxity in a son-in-law, who had to make his way in the world, not to remind him that there remained five guineas unpaid, which he had had of him just on going away. "Send it in a Venture for Ben to Jamaica," he said. The next letter to Bache relates to the hospitable Post-office. Bache, he says, will have heard, before it got to hand, that the writer had been displaced, and consequently would have it no longer in his power to assist him in his views relating to the Post-office; "As things are," he remarked, "I would not wish to see you concern'd in it. For I conceive that the Dismissing me merely for not being corrupted by the Office to betray the Interests of my Country, will make it some Disgrace among us to hold such an Office."

The remainder of Franklin's letters to Bache, with the exception of a letter introducing to him Thomas Paine, the author of *Common Sense*, were written from Passy. One of them had something pungent but just enough to say about Lee and Izard and the cabal for removing Temple. Sally declared on one occasion that she hated all South Carolinians from B (Bee, a member of Congress from South Carolina) to Izard. This letter discloses the fact that Ben had been placed at school at Geneva in "*the old thirteen United States* of Switzerland," as the writer calls them. It is signed "I am your affectionate father." Another letter indicates that Franklin had sent a profile of the growing boy to his parents, so that they could see the changes which he had undergone in the preceding four years. This letter also expresses the willingness of the grandfather to give at his expense to

William, Bache's second son, the best education that America could afford. In his next and last letter to Bache, Franklin makes these comments upon Ben which not only show how much he loved him but how quietly his temperament could accept even such a disappointment as his failure to secure the merited office for Temple.

Benny continues well, and grows amazingly. He is a very sensible and a very good Lad, and I love him much. I had Thoughts of bringing him up under his Cousin, and fitting him for Public Business, thinking he might be of Service hereafter to his Country; but being now convinc'd that *Service is no Inheritance*, as the Proverb says, I have determin'd to give him a Trade that he may have something to depend on, and not be oblig'd to ask Favours or Offices of anybody. And I flatter myself he will make his way good in the World with God's Blessing. He has already begun to learn the business from Masters [a printer and a letter founder] who come to my House, and is very diligent in working and quick in learning.

Two letters to the boy himself are among Franklin's published writings. The first is couched in sweet, simple terms, suited to the age of his youthful correspondent, and the second is interesting only as evidencing how closely the grandfather scanned the drawings and handwriting of his grandson, and as emphasizing the importance that he always attached to arithmetic and accounts as elements of an useful education.

Sally's reply to her father's rebuke, on account of the modish vanities, that she asked of him, was quite spirited.

How could my dear papa [she said] give me so severe a reprimand for wishing a little finery. He would not, I am sure, if he knew how much I have felt it. Last winter (in consequence of the surrender of General Burgoyne) was a season of triumph to the Whigs, and they spent it gayly; you would not have had me, I am sure, stay away from the Embas-

sadors' or Gerard's entertainments, nor when I was invited to spend a day with General Washington and his lady; and you would have been the last person, I am sure, to have wished to see me dressed with singularity: Though I never loved dress so much as to wish to be particularly fine, yet I never will go out when I cannot appear so as to do credit to my family and husband.

Apparently, Sally was not always so unsuccessful as she was on this occasion in her efforts to secure something to wear, suitable to her situation as the daughter of a very distinguished citizen of Philadelphia in easy circumstances. Nothing she once wrote to her father was ever more admired than her new gown. It is obvious, however, that Franklin was resolved that his daughter at least should heed and profit by what Father Abraham had to say in his discourse about the effect of silks, satins, scarlet and velvets in putting out the kitchen fire. In his will, he bequeathed to her the picture of Louis XVI., given to him by the King, which was set with four hundred and eight diamonds, "requesting, however, that she would not form any of those diamonds into ornaments either for herself or daughters, and thereby introduce or countenance the expensive, vain, and useless fashion of wearing jewels in this country." The outer circle of the diamonds was sold by Sally, and on the proceeds she and her husband made the tour of Europe.

When Franklin returned from his second mission, it was to reside with his daughter and son-in-law in the new house with the kitchen, dining-room and blue chamber mentioned in his letters to Deborah. Cohabitation with the Baches proved so agreeable that he wrote Polly Hewson that he was delighted with his little family. "Will," he told Temple, "has got a little Gun, marches with it, and whistles at the same time by way of Fife." There are also some amusing observations in a later letter of his to Temple on a letter written by Ben to Temple, when

Temple was at the house of his Tory father in New Jersey, but which was never sent.

> It was thought [said Franklin] to be too full of Pot hooks & Hangers, and so unintelligible by the dividing Words in the Middle and joining Ends of some to Beginnings of others, that if it had fallen into the Hands of some Committee it might have given them too much Trouble to decypher it, on a Suspicion of its containing Treason, especially as directed to a Tory House.

An earlier letter from Franklin to Polly Hewson about Ben is marked by the same playful spirit. "Ben," the grandfather said, "when I delivered him your Blessing, inquired the Age of Elizabeth [Mrs. Hewson's daughter] and thought her yet too young for him; but, as he made no other Objection, and that will lessen every day, I have only to wish being alive to dance with your Mother at the Wedding."

After his arrival in America, Franklin was appointed Postmaster-General of the Colonies by Congress, and this appointment gave Richard Bache another opportunity to solicit an office from his father-in-law. With his usual unfaltering nepotism, Franklin appointed him Deputy Postmaster-General, but subsequently Congress removed him, and there was nothing for him to do but to court fortune in business again, with such aid as Franklin could give him in mercantile circles in France. In the latter years of Franklin's life, there was a very general feeling that he had made public office too much of a family perquisite, and this feeling weakened Richard Bache's tenure on the Post Office, and helped to frustrate all Franklin's plans for the public preferment of Temple and Benjamin Franklin Bache. Much as Washington admired Franklin the latter was unable to obtain even by the most assiduous efforts an office under his administration for either of them.

When Franklin's ship approached Philadelphia on his return from Paris, it was his son-in-law who put off in a boat to bring him and his grandsons ashore, and, when he landed at Market Street wharf, he was received by a crowd of people with huzzas and accompanied with acclamations quite to his door.

After his return he again took up his residence with the Baches in the same house as before, and there is but little more to say about the members of the Bache family. There are, however, some complimentary things worth recalling that were said of Sally by some of her French contemporaries.

She [Marbois wrote to Franklin in 1781] passed a part of last year in exertions to rouse the zeal of the Pennsylvania ladies; and she made on this occasion such a happy use of the eloquence which you know she possesses, that a large part of the American army was provided with shirts, bought with their money or made by their hands. If there are in Europe [he also said] any women who need a model of attachment to domestic duties and love for their country, Mrs. Bache may be pointed out to them as such.

The Marquis de Chastellux tells us that she was "simple in her manners," and "like her respectable father, she possesses his benevolence."

Of course, from the letters of Franklin himself we obtain some insight into the domestic conditions by which he was surrounded in his home during the last stages of his existence. To John Jay and Mrs. Jay he wrote, shortly after his arrival in America, that he was then in the bosom of his family, and found four new little prattlers, who clung about the knees of their grandpapa, and afforded him great pleasure. It is a peaceful slope, though near the foot of the hill, which is presented to our eyes in these words written by him to Jan Ingenhousz:

Except that I am too much encumber'd with Business, I find myself happily situated here, among my numerous Friends, plac'd at the Head of my Country by its unanimous Voice, in the Bosom of my Family, my Offspring to wait on me and nurse me, in a House I built 23 Years since to my Mind.

A still later letter, in which he speaks of Sally, tends to support the idea that it was not his but William Franklin's fault that the reconciliation, which was supposed to have taken place between father and son abroad, was not sufficiently complete to repress the acrid reference made by Franklin in his will to the fact that his son had been a Loyalist.

I too [he wrote to his friend, Mather Byles] have a Daughter, who lives with me and is the Comfort of my declining Years, while my Son is estrang'd from me by the Part he took in the late War, and keeps aloof, residing in England, whose Cause he *espous'd;* whereby the old Proverb is exemplified;

"My Son is my Son till he take him a Wife;
But my Daughter's my Daughter all Days of her Life."

We are the quicker to place the blame for the recrudescence of the former bitterness upon William Franklin because the life of Franklin is full of proofs that he had a truly forgiving disposition.[1] It is a fact, however, that his

[1] The entire conduct of Franklin towards his son after the dismissal of the father from office by the British Government seems to have been thoroughly considerate and decorous. His wish that William Franklin would resign his office as Governor of New Jersey, which he could not hold without pecuniary loss to his father, and without apparent insensibility to the indignity to which his father had been subjected, was delicately intimated only. Even after William Franklin became a prisoner in Connecticut in consequence of his disloyalty to the American cause, Franklin, while giving Temple some very good practical reasons why he could not consent that he should be the bearer of a letter from Mrs. William Franklin to her husband, takes care to tell Temple that he does not blame his desire of seeing a father that he had so much reason to love. At this time he also

unrelenting antipathy to Loyalists is the one thing in his career unworthy of a sense of justice and breadth of intellectual charity, otherwise well-nigh perfect. We cannot but regret that anything should have shaken the poise of a character which Lecky has truthfully termed "one of the calmest and best balanced of human characters." But it is not given even to a Franklin to see things in their ordinary colors through a blood-red mist, and quite as true as any saying that Poor Richard ever conceived or borrowed is *Acerrima proximorum odia.*

In still another letter, one to Madame Brillon, he says, "A dutiful and affectionate Daughter, with her Husband and Six Children compose my Family. The Children are all promising, and even the youngest, who is but four Years old, contributes to my Amusement"; and, about a year and a half before his death, he records in a letter to Elizabeth Partridge, the "Addition of a little good-natured Girl, whom I begin to love as well as the rest." In yet another letter, this time to his friend, Alexander Small, after the birth of this little girl, there is a revelation of the domestic quietude in which his long life closed. "I have," he said, "seven promising grandchildren by my daughter, who play with and amuse me, and she is a kind attentive nurse to me when I am at any time indisposed; so that I

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relieved with a gift of money the immediate necessities of Mrs. William Franklin. The temper of his letters to Temple, when Temple went over to England from France, at his instance, to pay his duty to William Franklin, was that of settled reconciliation with his son. "Give my Love to your Father," is a message in one of these letters. When he touched at Southampton on his return from his French mission, William Franklin, among others, was there to greet him. In the succeeding year we find Franklin asking Andrew Strahan to send him a volume and to present his account for it to his son. But on one occasion during the last twelve months of his life, he speaks of William no longer as "my son" but as "William Franklin." On the whole, it would appear that it was not so much the original defection of the son from the American cause as the fact that he kept aloof from the father, after the return of the father from France, which was responsible for the asperity with which the latter refers in his will to the political course of William Franklin during the Revolution.

pass my time as agreeably as at my age a man may well expect, and have little to wish for, except a more easy exit than my malady seems to threaten." By this time, Benjamin Franklin Bache was old enough to be turning to the practical purposes of self-support the knowledge of printing which he had acquired in France. "I am too old to follow printing again myself," wrote Franklin to Mrs. Catherine Greene, "but, loving the business, I have brought up my grandson Benjamin to it, and have built and furnished a printing-house for him, which he now manages under my eye." The type used by Benjamin in his business were those which his grandfather had cast with the aid of his servants in Paris, and had employed in printing the brilliant little productions penned by his friends and himself, which created so much merriment in the *salon* of Madame Helvétius.

The seven children of Sarah Bache were Benjamin Franklin Bache, who married Margaret Marcoe, William Hartman Bache, who married Catharine Wistar, Eliza Franklin Bache, who married John Edward Harwood, Louis Bache, who married first Mary Ann Swift, and then Esther Egee, Deborah Bache, who married William J. Duane, Richard Bache, who married Sophia B. Dallas, a daughter of Alexander J. Dallas, and Sarah Bache, who married Thomas Sargeant.

Besides being a good husband, father and grandfather, Franklin was also a good son. His father, Josiah, had seven children by his first wife, Anne, and ten by his second, Abiah Folger, Franklin's mother. Of this swarm, we are told by the *Autobiography* that Franklin could remember thirteen children sitting at one time at his father's table, who all grew up to be men and women, and married. Franklin himself was the youngest son, and the youngest child but two. In few subjects was his adult interest keener than in that of population, and the circumstances of his early life were certainly calculated to stimulate it

into a high degree of precocious activity. It is a pleasing portrait that he paints of his father for us in the *Autobiography*. After describing his physique in the terms already quoted by us, Franklin says:

He was ingenious, could draw prettily, was skilled a little in music, and had a clear pleasing voice, so that when he played psalm tunes on his violin and sung withal, as he sometimes did in an evening after the business of the day was over, it was extremely agreeable to hear. He had a mechanical genius too, and, on occasion, was very handy in the use of other tradesman's tools; but his great excellence lay in a sound understanding and solid judgment in prudential matters, both in private and publick affairs. In the latter, indeed, he was never employed, the numerous family he had to educate and the straitness of his circumstances keeping him close to his trade; but I remember well his being frequently visited by leading people, who consulted him for his opinion in affairs of the town or of the church he belonged to, and showed a good deal of respect for his judgment and advice: he was also much consulted by private persons about their affairs when any difficulty occurred, and frequently chosen an arbitrator between contending parties. At his table he liked to have, as often as he could, some sensible friend or neighbour to converse with, and always took care to start some ingenious or useful topic for discourse, which might tend to improve the minds of his children. By this means he turned our attention to what was good, just, and prudent in the conduct of life; and little or no notice was ever taken of what related to the victuals on the table, whether it was well or ill-dressed, in or out of season, of good or bad flavour, preferable or inferior to this or that other thing of the kind, so that I was bro't up in such a perfect inattention to those matters as to be quite indifferent what kind of food was set before me, and so unobservant of it, that to this day if I am asked I can scarce tell a few hours after dinner what I dined upon. This has been a convenience to me in travelling, where my companions have been sometimes very unhappy for want of a suitable gratification of their more delicate, because better instructed, tastes and appetites.

A story is credited to Josiah by Franklin which is quite in the manner of the son. When Charles the First ordered his proclamation authorizing sports on Sunday to be read in all churches, many clergymen complied, some refused and others hurried it through as indistinctly as possible. But a certain clergyman to the surprise of his congregation read it distinctly. He followed the reading, however, with the Fourth Commandment, *Remember to keep holy the Sabbath Day*, and then said, "Brethren, I have laid before you the Command of your King, and the Commandment of your God. I leave it to yourselves to judge which of the two ought rather to be observed."

It is to be wished that Franklin could have given us in the *Autobiography* a companion portrait of his mother also; but this he has not done. He tells us little more than that she was the daughter of Peter Folger, a resident of Nantucket, had, like her husband, an excellent constitution, and suckled all her ten children—a point of capital importance with her son. Franklin further tells us that he never knew either his father or his mother to have any sickness but that of which they died, he at eighty-nine and she at eighty-five. They were both buried in Boston, and rested for many years under a monument, erected over their graves by Franklin, with a happy inscription from his pen, until this monument, having fallen into a state of dilapidation, was replaced in 1827 by a more durable one, erected by a number of citizens of Boston, who were desirous, as their supplementary inscription states, of reminding succeeding generations that he was born in Boston. In his inscription, Franklin, true to his ideals, states with pride that Josiah and Abiah lived lovingly together in wedlock fifty-five years, and, without an estate, or any gainful employment, by constant labor and industry, with God's blessing, maintained a large family comfortably, and brought up thirteen children and seven grandchildren reputably. In the light of the

altered domestic standards of the present time, it requires some little effort, after reading these words, to accept the subsequent statement in the inscription that Josiah was not only a pious but a "prudent" man.

Peter Folger was evidently regarded by Franklin with distinct favor because of his tolerant characteristics. The flower of tolerance did not often lift up its head in the frigid air of what some one has wittily styled the "ice age" of New England history. In the *Autobiography*, Franklin speaks of Folger as one of the first settlers of New England, of whom honourable mention is made by Cotton Mather, in his church history of that country, entitled *Magnalia Christi Americana*, as "*a godly, learned Englishman*," if he remembers the words rightly.

I have heard [the *Autobiography* goes on] that he wrote sundry small occasional pieces, but only one of them was printed, which I saw now many years since. It was written in 1675, in the home-spun verse of that time and people, and addressed to those then concerned in the government there. It was in favour of liberty of conscience, and in behalf of the Baptists, Quakers, and other sectaries that had been under persecution, ascribing the Indian Wars, and other distresses that had befallen the country, to that persecution, as so many judgments of God to punish so heinous an offense, and exhorting a repeal of those uncharitable laws. The whole appeared to me as written with a good deal of decent plainness and manly freedom. The six concluding lines I remember, though I have forgotten the two first of the stanza; but the purport of them was, that his censures proceeded from good-will, and, therefore, he would be known to be the author,

> "Because to be a libeller (says he)
> I hate it with my heart;
> From Sherburne town, where now I dwell,
> My name I do put here;
> Without offense your real friend,
> It is Peter Folgier."

Verses like these, it is to be feared, call for somewhat the same spirit of toleration as that which Folger himself exhibited towards the Baptists and Quakers, but they were well worthy of remembrance, at any rate, for the brave and enlightened spirit by which they were informed.[1]

Peter Folger's plainness of speech seems to have been a family characteristic. In a letter to his sister Jane, written in his last years, Franklin told her frankly that, if there had been a misunderstanding between her and one of her relations, he should have concluded that it was her fault, "for I think our Family," he said, "were always subject to being a little Miffy." Then, as was his habit, when he had discharged the disagreeable duty of saying something slightly censorious, he brings the stress of his good nature to bear upon his pen just a little harder than usual.

> By the way [he asked] is our Relationship in Nantucket worn-out? I have met with none from thence of late years, who were disposed to be acquainted with me, except Captain Timothy Foulger. They are wonderfully shy. But I admire their honest plainness of Speech. About a year ago I invited two of them to dine with me. Their answer was, that they would, if they could not do better. I suppose they did better; for I never saw them afterwards, and so had no Opportunity of showing my Miff, if I had one.

The letters from Franklin to his father and mother are few in number but not lacking in interest. To the one to Josiah, in which he made the heinous confession that his mind was not very clear as to the difference between Arianism and Arminianism, we have already adverted. In this letter, besides the burden of defending his religious

[1] Altogether Peter Folger must have been a man of sterling sense and character. He was one of the five Commissioners appointed to survey and measure the land on the Island of Nantucket, and in the order of appointment the following provision was inserted: "Whatsoever shall be done by them, or any three of them, *Peter Folger being one*, shall be accounted legal and valid."

orthodoxy before a very stern tribunal, he had to assume the burden of satisfying his good mother that there was nothing odious in the principles and practices of the Freemasons; and this in the face of the fact that one of their rules was not to admit women into their lodges. Another letter, which begins "Honoured Father and Mother," and ends, "Your affectionate and dutiful son," discourses in quite a learned fashion upon various remedies that might take the place of the ebbing *vis medicatrix naturæ* which had served the aged pair so well for such a long span of years; but the son is careful to say that he hopes that his parents will consider his advice upon such subjects only as marks of his good will and put no more of it in practice than should happen to agree with their doctor's directions. Another letter, beginning "Honoured Mother," deals with topics of a very different nature from either religious dogmas or the *sapo philosophorum* of his medicinal communication. Cousin Josiah Davenport and his spouse had arrived at Philadelphia hearty and well. He had met them the evening before at Trenton, thirty miles off, and had accompanied them to town. How gracious, we may remark, was the old Pennsylvania hospitality which sometimes greeted the coming guest thirty miles away, and, instead of speeding the parting guest, sometimes followed him for as great a distance when he was going!

They [Franklin continued] went into their own house on Monday, and I believe will do very well, for he seems bent on industry, and she appears a discreet, notable young woman. My wife has been to see them every day, calling in as she passes by; and I suspect has fallen in love with our new cousin; for she entertains me a deal, when she comes home, with what Cousin Sally does, and what Cousin Sally says, what a good contriver she is, and the like.

In his next letter to Abiah, Franklin sends her one of his far-famed almanacs, and then adds, "I send you also a

moidore enclosed, which please to accept towards chaise hire, that you may ride warm to meetings this winter." From the moidore he passes to infantile complaints which it must have pained the heart of the mother of ten children to hear had carried off many children in Philadelphia that summer, and then, after just a word about Cousin Coleman and two of the outspoken Folgers, he has this to say about Sally: "Your granddaughter is the greatest lover of her book and school, of any child I ever knew, and is very dutiful to her mistress as well as to us."

In one of her letters to her son Abiah tells him that she is very weak and short-breathed, so that she can't sit up to write much, although she sleeps well at night, and her cough is better, and she has a pretty good stomach to her victuals. In the same letter, she also says: "Pray excuse my bad writing and inditing, for all tell me I am too old to write letters." No courtier could have framed a more graceful response to this appeal, let alone the sincerity of filial respect and love.

We received your kind Letter of the 2d Instant [wrote Franklin] and we are glad to hear you still enjoy such a Measure of Health, notwithstanding your great Age. We read your Writing very easily. I never met with a Word in your Letters but what I could readily understand; for, tho' the Hand is not always the best, the Sense makes everything plain.

The numerous family details in this letter render it the most interesting of Franklin's letters to his mother. They had concluded, he said, to sell at the first good opportunity a negro slave and his wife, who appear to have been guilty of some thievery, "for we do not like Negro Servants," he declared. For the sake of human consistency, it is to be hoped that the pair were sold long before he became the President of the Pennsylvania Society for the Abolition of Slavery, and assailed the

African slave trade with such telling raillery. But, to sell all one's own negroes, and then to enter upon a perfervid course of agitation for the enfranchisement of one's neighbor's negroes, without compensation, was a thing of not uncommon occurrence in American history, so long as the institution of slavery lasted. Will (William Franklin), he tells Abiah, had acquired a habit of idleness on the expedition against Canada, but had begun of late to apply himself to business, and he hoped would become an industrious man. "He imagin'd his Father," said Franklin, "had got enough for him, but I have assured him that I intend to spend what little I have myself, if it please God that I live long enough; and, as he by no means wants Sense, he can see by my going on, that I am like to be as good as my Word."

Sally [he says] grows a fine Girl, and is extremely industrious with her Needle, and delights in her Book. She is of a most affectionate Temper, and perfectly dutiful and obliging to her Parents, and to all. Perhaps I flatter myself too much, but I have Hopes that she will prove an ingenious, sensible, notable, and worthy Woman, like her Aunt Jenny. She goes now to the Dancing-School.

After Franklin decamped from Boston as a boy, he rarely again saw his parents, but, down to the days of their respective deaths, he kept in touch with them immediately, through his own correspondence with them, and also mediately through his correspondence with his sister Jane. "You have mentioned nothing in your letter of our dear parents," he observes in one of his letters to her. "Dear Sister, I love you tenderly for your care of our father in his sickness," he writes to her on another occasion. And, finally, when Abiah, "home had gone and ta'en her wages," he sent these feeling words to this same sister and her husband:

Dear Brother and Sister, I received yours with the affecting news of our dear good mother's death. I thank you for your long continued care of her in her old age and sickness. Our distance made it impracticable for us to attend her, but you have supplied all. She has lived a good life, as well as a long one, and is happy.

Josiah left an estate valued at twenty-four hundred dollars. Some years after his death, when Franklin happened to be in Boston, an old man produced a bond, executed by the father for about fifteen or seventeen pounds, and asked the son to pay it. This Franklin declined to do, taking the position that, as he had never received any share of his father's estate, he did not think himself obliged to pay any of the debts due by it. Another reason, as he afterwards stated in a letter to his sister Jane, in which the incident was mentioned, was that he considered the matter one rather for the attention of his brother John, the administrator of his father, than himself. But, in this same letter, nevertheless, he sent these instructions to Jane: "If you know that Person, I wish you would now, out of Hall's Money (a sum that was to be collected for him and to be given to her) pay that Debt; for I remember his Mildness on the Occasion with some Regard." A soft answer, we know, tends to turn away wrath, but it is not often, we imagine, that mildness proves such an effective policy for the collection of a stale debt.

"Dear kindred blood! How I do love you all!" the exclamation of Daniel Webster, might as well have issued from the great, loving heart of Franklin. Like the brethren of Joseph, the son of Jacob, pretty much all of his contemporary relations came to share in one way or another in the good fortune of the only prosperous member of the family. Franklin was too young to have ever met the two brothers of his father, who lived and died in England—John, the Banbury dyer, with whom Franklin's

paternal grandfather, Thomas resided in his old age, and with whom Franklin's father served an apprenticeship, and Thomas, the Ecton forerunner of Franklin himself, whom we have already mentioned. But his paternal uncle, Benjamin, who followed Franklin's father to New England, and lived in the same house with him for some years, Franklin did know, and brings before us quite clearly in the *Autobiography*. He was bred a silk dyer in England, was an ingenious and very pious man, we are assured by his nephew, and died at a great age. It was to the warm affection that existed between this uncle, whose grandson, Samuel Franklin, was one of Franklin's correspondents, and Franklin's father that Franklin owed his Christian name. Besides being a dyer, a great attender of sermons of the best preachers, "which he took down in his shorthand," he was, the *Autobiography* states, a poet, and "also much of a politician; too much, perhaps, for his station."

In his agreeable life of Franklin, Parton has this to say of the uncle's poetry books.

> The poetry books of Uncle Benjamin, which are still in perfect preservation, though it is a hundred and eighty years since he bought the first of them, are neatly written and carefully indexed. Many of the pieces are acrostics, and several are curiously shaped on the page-dwindling or expanding in various forms, according to the quaint fancy of the poet.

No true poet, of course, ever had the patience to index his poems, and the best that can be said of the uncle as a poet is that, though he did not reach even the lowest slopes of Parnassus, he attained a point distinctly nearer to its base than the nephew ever did. Every family event seems to have been a peg for him to hang a verse upon, and among his lines are these sent across the Atlantic in return for something from the pen of his

nephew who was at that time about seven years of age:

"'Tis time for me to throw aside my pen,
When hanging sleeves read, write, and rhyme like men,
This forward spring foretells a plenteous crop;
For, if the bud bear grain, what will the top!
If plenty in the verdant blade appear,
What may we not soon hope for in the ear!
When flowers are beautiful before they're blown,
What rarities will afterward be shown."

The uncle was living in New England when Josiah, Franklin's brother, who had run away to sea, and who had not been heard from for nine years, turned up again in Boston. That was a domestic event of entirely too much importance to be unsung by an uncle at once pious and poetical. So, after some vigorous references to the Deity, who

"Stills the storm and does Asswage
Proud Dreadfull seas Death-Threatning Rage,"

the honest poet breaks out into this invocation in which he had every right to believe that the long-lost Josiah would heartily join:

"O Let men praise this mighty Lord,
And all his Wondrous Works Record;
Let all the Sons of men, before
Whose Eyes those Works are Done, Adore."

But his rhymes appear to have fallen upon an ear deaf to the appeals of both piety and poetry, for one of the poet's poetry books contains this resentful entry:

"The Third part of the 107 psalm, Which Follows Next, I composed to sing at First meeting with my Nephew Josiah Franklin, But being unaffected with Gods Great

Goodn[s]: In his many preservations and Deliverances, It was coldly Entertain'd."

The extent to which his uncle Benjamin had been a politician in England was brought home to Franklin by a curious incident when he was in London. A second-hand book dealer, who knew nothing of the relationship between the two, offered to sell him a collection of pamphlets, bound in eight volumes folio, and twenty-four volumes, quarto and octavo, and containing all the principal pamphlets and papers on political topics, printed in England from the Restoration down to the year 1715. On examining them, Franklin was satisfied from the handwriting of the tables of contents, memoranda of prices and marginal notes in them, as well as from other circumstances, that his Uncle Benjamin was the collector, and he bought them. In all probability, they had been sold by the uncle, when he emigrated from England to New England more than fifty years before.

The *Autobiography* does not mention the fact that Franklin had at least one aunt on the paternal side, but he had. In a letter in the year 1767 to Samuel Franklin, the grandson of his Uncle Benjamin, after stating that there were at that time but two of their relations bearing the name of Franklin living in England, namely, Thomas Franklin, of Lutterworth, in Leicestershire, a dyer, and his daughter, Sally, Franklin asserts that there were besides still living in England Eleanor Morris, an old maiden lady, the daughter of Hannah, the sister of Franklin's father, and Hannah Walker, the granddaughter of John, the brother of Franklin's father, and her three sons. No Arab was ever made happier by the reception of a guest than was Franklin by the discovery of a new Franklin. In 1781, when a lady at Königsberg, who was the granddaughter of a John Franklin, communicated to him certain facts about her family history, he replied in terms that left her no footing for a claim of relationship,

but added affably, "It would be a Pleasure to me to Discover a Relation in Europe, possessing the amiable Sentiments express'd in your Letter. I assure you I should not disown the meanest." One of the statements of this letter was that he had exact accounts of every person of his family since the year 1555, when it was established in England. Such a thing as sensitiveness to his humble origin or the social obscurity of his kinsfolk could find no lodgment in a mind so capacious, a heart so kind, or a nature so full of manly self-respect as his. To say nothing more, he was too much of a philosopher not to realize how close even the high-born nobleman, when detached from privilege and social superstition, is to the forked radish, to which elemental man has been likened. It is true that he once wrote to his sister Jane that he would not have her son Peter put the Franklin arms on soap of his making, and this has been cited as evidence that even Franklin had his petty modicum of social pride. The imputation overlooks the reason that he gave, namely, that to use the Franklin coat of arms for such a purpose would look too much like an attempt to counterfeit the soap formerly made by Peter's uncle John. It was Franklin's true pride of character that disarmed the social arrogance which might otherwise have rendered him less triumphantly successful than he was in winning his way into the favor of the most accomplished men, and the most beautiful and elegant women, in France.

With regard to his generous conduct to his brother James we have already spoken. Of Jemmy, James' son, who became Franklin's apprentice at James' request, we have a view in a letter from Franklin to his sister Jane in which he uses Jemmy as an illustration of how unreasonably her son Benny, when Mr. Parker's apprentice, might have complained of the clothes furnished to him by his master.

I never knew an apprentice [he said] contented with the clothes allowed him by his master, let them be what they would. Jemmy Franklin, when with me, was always dissatisfied and grumbling. When I was last in Boston, his aunt bid him go to a shop and please himself, which the gentleman did, and bought a suit of clothes on my account dearer by one half than any I ever afforded myself, one suit excepted; which I don't mention by way of complaint of Jemmy, for he and I are good friends, but only to show you the nature of boys.

What a good friend he proved to Jemmy, when the latter became his own master, we have seen. The *erratum* of which Franklin was guilty in his relations to his brother James was fully corrected long before he left a will behind him conferring upon James' descendants the same measure of his remembrance as that conferred by him upon the descendants of his brother Samuel and his sisters.

Four of Franklin's brothers died young, and Josiah, his sea faring brother, perished at sea not long after he excited the dudgeon of his uncle Benjamin by his indifference to his uncle's lines of thanksgiving.

As long as Franklin's brothers John and Peter were engaged, as their father had been, in the business of making soap and candles, Franklin assisted them by obtaining consignments of their wares from them, and advertising these wares in his newspaper, and selling them in his shop. Later, when he became Deputy Postmaster-General of the Colonies, he made John postmaster at Boston and Peter postmaster at Philadelphia. Referring to a visit that he paid to John at Newport, Franklin says in the *Autobiography*, "He received me very affectionately, for he always lov'd me." When John died in 1756 at the age of sixty-five, some years after his brother Benjamin had thoughtfully devised a special catheter for his use, the latter wrote to his sister Jane, "I condole with you on the loss of our dear brother. As our number grows less, let us love one another proportionably

more." John's widow he made postmistress at Boston in her husband's place.

Peter Franklin died in 1766 in the seventy-fourth year of his age. As soon as the news of Peter's death reached Franklin in London, he wrote a most feeling letter to Peter's widow, Mary.

It has pleased God at length [he said] to take from us my only remaining Brother, and your affectionate Husband, with whom you have lived in uninterrupted Harmony and Love near half a Century.

Considering the many Dangers & Hardships his Way of Life led him into, and the Weakness of his Constitution, it is wonderful that he lasted so long. It was God's Goodness that spared him to us. Let us, instead of repining at what we have lost, be thankful for what we have enjoyed.

He then proceeds, in order to allay the widow's fears as to her future, to tell her that he proposes to set up a printing house for her adopted son to be carried on in partnership with her, and further to encourage this son if he managed well.[1]

Of Franklin's brother Samuel, we know but little.

Franklin's oldest sister, Elizabeth Dowse, the wife of Captain Dowse, lived to a very great age, and fell into a state of extreme poverty. When he was consulted by her relations in New England as to whether it was not best for her to give up the house in which she was living, and to sell her personal effects, he sent a reply full of wise kindness.

As *having their own way* is one of the greatest comforts of life to old people [he said], I think their friends should en-

[1] That Peter Franklin had some of the ability of his famous brother we may infer from a long letter written to him by Franklin in which the latter, after acknowledging the receipt of a ballad by Peter, descants upon the superiority of the old, simple ditties over modern songs in lively and searching terms which he would hardly have wasted on a man of ordinary intelligence.

deavour to accommodate them in that, as well as in anything else. When they have long lived in a house, it becomes natural to them; they are almost as closely connected with it, as the tortoise with his shell; they die, if you tear them out of it; old folks and old trees, if you remove them, it is ten to one that you kill them; so let our good old sister be no more importuned on that head. We are growing old fast ourselves, and shall expect the same kind of indulgences; if we give them, we shall have a right to receive them in our turn.

And as to her few fine things, I think she is in the right not to sell them, and for the reason she gives, that they will fetch but little; and when that little is spent, they would be of no further use to her; but perhaps the expectation of possessing them at her death may make that person tender and careful of her, and helpful to her to the amount of ten times their value. If so, they are put to the best use they possibly can be.

I hope you visit sister as often as your affairs will permit, and afford her what assistance and comfort you can in her present situation. *Old age*, *infirmities*, and *poverty*, joined, are afflictions enough. The *neglect* and *slights* of friends and near relations should never be added. People in her circumstances are apt to suspect this sometimes without cause; *appearances* should therefore be attended to, in our conduct towards them, as well as *realities*.

And then follows the sentence which indicates that, apart from the value, which belonged to his advice on any practical point, there was good reason why his views about sister Dowse's house and finery should be entitled to peculiar respect. "I write by this post to cousin Williams," he said, "to continue his care, which I doubt not he will do."

This letter was addressed to his sister Jane. In another to her, written a few weeks later, he said, "I am glad you have resolved to visit sister Dowse oftener; it will be a great comfort to her to find she is not neglected by you, and your example may, perhaps, be followed by some others

of her relations." In the succeeding year, when he was settled in England, he writes to his sister Jane, "My wife will let you see my letter, containing an account of our travels, which I would have you read to sister Dowse, and give my love to her."

Another sister of Franklin, Mary, married Captain Robert Holmes. He was the master of a sloop that plied between Boston and the Delaware, and, when he heard at New Castle that his run-a-way brother-in-law was living in Philadelphia, he wrote to him begging him to return to Boston, and received from him a reply, composed with so much literary skill that Governor Keith of Pennsylvania, when the letter was shown to him by Holmes, declared that the writer appeared to be a young man of promising parts, and should be encouraged. Mrs. Holmes died of cancer of the breast, which is responsible for the only occasion perhaps on which Franklin was ever known to incline his ear to the virtues of a nostrum.

> We have here in town [he wrote to his sister Jane] a kind of shell made of some wood, cut at a proper time, by some man of great skill (as they say), which has done wonders in that disease among us, being worn for some time on the breast. I am not apt to be superstitiously fond of believing such things, but the instances are so well attested, as sufficiently to convince the most incredulous.

Another sister of Franklin, Lydia, married Robert Scott, but our information about her is very meagre.

This is also true of Anne Harris, still another sister of his. We do know, however, that some of her family wandered away to London before Franklin left America on his mission to France, and that one of them took pains to apprise him of her urgent wants after he arrived there. She was, she said, "Obliged to Worke very hard and Can But just git the common necessarys of life," and therefore

had "thoughts of going into a family as housekeeper . . . having lived in that station for several years and gave grate satisfaction." With a curious disregard to existing conditions, quite unworthy of her connection with her illustrious relative, she even asked him to aid her in securing the promotion of her son in the British Navy.

A daughter of this sister, Grace Harris, married Jonathan Williams, a Boston merchant engaged in the West India trade, who enjoyed the honor of acting as the moderator of the meetings held at Faneuil Hall in 1773 for the purpose of preventing the landing of the odious tea. She must have been an elated mother when she received from her uncle in 1771 a letter in which he spoke of her two sons in these terms:

They are, I assure you, exceeding welcome to me; and they behave with so much Prudence, that no two young Men could possibly less need the Advice you would have me give them. Josiah is very happily employ'd in his Musical Pursuits. And as you hinted to me, that it would be agreeable to you, if I employ'd Johnathan in Writing, I requested him to put my Accounts in Order, which had been much neglected. He undertook it with the utmost chearfulness and Readiness, and executed it with the greatest Diligence, making me a compleat new Set of Books, fairly written out and settled in a Mercantile Manner, which is a great Satisfaction to me, and a very considerable service. I mention this, that you may not be in the least Uneasy from an Apprehension of their Visit being burthensome to me; it being, I assure you, quite the contrary.

It has been wonderful to me to see a young Man from America, in a Place so full of various Amusements as London is, as attentive to Business, as diligent in it, and keeping as close at home till it was finished, as if it had been for his own Profit; and as if he had been at the Public Diversions so often, as to be tired of them.

I pray God to keep and preserve you and yours, and give you again, in due time, a happy Sight of these valuable Sons.

The same favorable opinion of these two grandnephews found expression in a letter from Franklin to his sister Jane. Josiah, he said, had attained his heart's desire in being under the tuition of Mr. Stanley (the musical composer), who, though he had long left off teaching, kindly undertook, at Franklin's request, to instruct him, and was much pleased with his quickness of apprehension, and the progress he was making, and Jonathan appeared a very valuable young man, sober, regular and inclined to industry and frugality, which were promising signs of success in business. "I am very happy in their Company," the letter further stated.

With the help of Franklin, Jonathan, one of these two young men, became the naval agent of the United States at Nantes, when Franklin was in France. Later, he was charged by Arthur Lee with improperly retaining in his hands in this capacity upwards of one hundred thousand livres due to the United States, and Franklin insisted that Arthur Lee should make good his charge.

I have no desire to screen Mr. Williams on acc^{t} of his being my Nephew [he said] if he is guilty of what you charge him with. I care not how soon he is deservedly punish'd and the family purg'd of him; for I take it that a Rogue living in (a) Family is a greater Disgrace to it than one *hang'd out* of it.

But, when steps were taken by Franklin to have the accounts passed upon by a body of disinterested referees, Lee haughtily refused to reduce his vague accusation to a form sufficiently specific to be laid before them. After John Adams succeeded Silas Deane, Franklin and himself united in executing an order for the payment to Williams of the balance claimed by him, but Adams had been brought over to the suspicions of Lee to such an extent that the order provided that it was not to be understood as an approval of the accounts, but that Williams was to be

responsible to Congress for their correctness. With such impetuosity did Adams adopt these suspicions that, in a few days after his arrival at Paris, when he had really had no opportunity to investigate the matter, he concurred with Lee in ordering Williams to close his existing accounts and to make no new ones. This, of course, was equivalent to dismissal from the employment. Franklin, probably realizing not only the hopelessness of a contest of one against two, but the unwisdom from a public point of view of feeding the flame of such a controversy, united with his colleagues in signing the order.[1]

A bequest of books that he made to Williams is one among many other still more positive proofs that his confidence in his grandnephew was never impaired, and it is only fair to the memory of Adams to suppose that, if he ever had any substantial doubts about Williams' integrity, they were subsequently dispelled, for when

[1] The first letter from the Commissioners to Jonathan Williams, dated Apr. 13, 1778, simply asked him to abstain from any further purchases as naval agent, and to close his accounts for the present. It was not until May 25, 1778, that a letter was addressed to him by the Commissioners expressly revoking his authority as naval agent on the ground that Congress had authorized William Lee to superintend the commercial affairs of America in general, and he had appointed M. Schweighauser, a German merchant, as the person to look after all the maritime and commercial interests of America in the Nantes district. In signing the letter, Franklin took care to see that this clause was inserted: "It is not from any prejudice to you, Mr. Williams, for whom we have a great respect and esteem, but merely from a desire to save the public money, to prevent the clashing of claims and interests, and to avoid confusion and delays, that we have taken this step." The result was that, instead of the uniform commission of two per cent., charged by Williams for transacting the business of the naval agency, Schweighauser, whose clerk was Ludlow Lee, a nephew of Arthur Lee, charged as much as five per cent. on the simple delivery of tobacco to the farmers-general. Later Williams, who was an expert accountant, was restored to the position which he had really filled with blameless integrity and efficiency. After his return to America, his career was an eminent one. He is termed by General George W. Cullum in his work on the campaigns and engineers of the War of 1812–15 the father of the Engineer Service of the United States. In the same work, General Cullum also speaks of his "noble character."

President he appointed Williams a major of artillery in the federal army; an appointment which ultimately resulted in his being made the first Superintendent of the Military Academy at West Point. The quarrel, however, did neither Franklin nor the American cause any good. It gave additional color to the accusation that he was too quick to billet his relatives upon the public, and had the effect also of intensifying the dissensions between our representatives in France which constitute such a painful chapter in the history of the American Revolution. To make things worse, Jonathan failed in business, before he left France, and had to obtain a *surséance* against his creditors through the application of his granduncle to the Count de Vergennes.

Franklin's sister, Sarah, did not long survive her marriage to Joseph Davenport. Her death, Franklin wrote to his sister Jane, "was a loss without doubt regretted by all that knew her, for she was a good woman." It was at his instance that Davenport removed to Philadelphia, and opened a bakery where he sold "choice middling bisket," and occasionally "Boston loaf sugar" and "choice pickled and spiced oisters in cags."

There is a letter from Franklin to Josiah Davenport, the son of Sarah Davenport, written just after the failure of the latter in business which shows that, open as the door of the Post Office usually was to members of the Franklin family, it was sometimes slammed with a bang in the face of a *mauvais sujet* of that blood. Franklin advises Josiah not to think of any place in the Post Office.

> The money you receive [he said] will slip thro' your Fingers, and you will run behind hand imperceptibly, when your Securities must suffer, or your Employers. I grow too old to run such Risques, and therefore wish you to propose nothing more of the kind to me. I have been hurt too much by endeavouring to help Cousin Ben Mecom. I have no Opinion of the Punctuality of Cousins. They are apt to take Liberties

with Relations they would not take with others, from a Confidence that a Relation will not sue them. And tho' I believe you now resolve and intend well in case of such an Appointment, I can have no Dependence that some unexpected Misfortune or Difficulty will not embarras your Affairs and render you again insolvent. Don't take this unkind. It is better to be thus free with you than to give you Expectations that cannot be answered.

So Josiah, who was keeping a little shop at the time, like the famous office-seeker, who is said to have begun by asking Lincoln for an office and to have ended by asking him for a pair of trousers, had to content himself with a gift of four dozen of Evans' maps, "which," said Franklin in his letter, "if you can sell you are welcome to apply the Money towards Clothing your Boys, or to any other Purpose."

But, of all Franklin's collateral relatives, the one that he loved best was his sister Jane, the wife of Edward Mecom. She survived her brother four years, dying at the age of eighty-two, and, from her childhood until his death, they cherished for each other the most devoted affection. Her letters show that she was a woman of uncommon force of character and mind, and the possessor of a heart so overflowing with tenderness that, when she heard of the birth of Mrs. Bache's seventh child, she even stated to her brother in her delight that she was so fond of children that she longed to kiss and play with every clean, healthy one that she saw on the street. Mrs. Bache, she thought, might yet be the mother of twelve children like herself, though she did not begin so young.

In a letter written to her by Franklin from Philadelphia just after he reached his majority, and when she was a fresh girl of fourteen, he reminds her that she was ever his peculiar favorite. He had heard, he said, that she was grown a celebrated beauty, and he had almost determined to give her a tea table, but when he considered

that the character of a good housewife was far preferable to that of being only a pretty gentlewoman he had concluded to send her a spinning wheel, as a small token of his sincere love and affection. Then followed this priggish advice:

> Sister, farewell, and remember that modesty, as it makes the most homely virgin amiable and charming, so the want of it infallibly renders the most perfect beauty disagreeable and odious. But, when that brightest of female virtues shines among other perfections of body and mind in the same person, it makes the woman more lovely than an angel.

The spinning wheel was a fit symbol of the narrow, struggling life, which was to be Jane Mecom's portion, and which would have imposed upon her a load heavier than she could have borne if her good Philadelphia genius had not always been by her side, either in person or by his watchful proxy, Jonathan Williams, the father of his grandnephew of that name, to sustain her fainting footsteps. Children she had, and to spare, but they were all striking illustrations of the truth, uttered by the Virginia planter, who affirmed that it is easier for one parent to take care of thirteen children than it is for thirteen children to take care of one parent. Nothing could be more beautiful than the relations between brother and sister; on the one side a vigilant sympathy and generosity which never lost sight for a moment of the object of their affectionate and helpful offices; on the other a grateful idolatry, slightly tinged with the reserve of reverence. Clothes, flour, firewood, money were among the more direct and material forms assumed by Franklin's assistance, given not begrudgingly and frugally, but always with the anxious fear, to no little extent justified by Jane's own unselfish and self-respecting reticence, that she was not as frank as she might be in laying before him the real measure of her necessities. "Let me know if you want

any assistance," he was quick to ask her after his return from England in 1775, signing the letter in which he made the request, "Your very loving brother." "Your bill is honoured," he writes to her on another occasion after his return from France to Philadelphia. "It is impossible for me always to guess what you may want, and I hope, therefore, that you will never be shy in letting me know wherein I can help to make your life more comfortable."

> How has my poor old Sister gone thro' the Winter? [he inquired of Jonathan Williams, the younger]. Tell me frankly whether she lives comfortably, or is pinched? For I am afraid she is too cautious of acquainting me with all her Difficulties, tho' I am always ready and willing to relieve her when I am acquainted with them.

It is manifest that at times he experienced a serious sense of difficulty in doing for her as much as he was disposed to do, and once, when she had thanked him with even more than her usual emphasis for a recent benefaction, he parried her gratitude with one of the humorous stories that served him for so many different purposes. Her letter of extravagant thanks, he said, put him in mind of the story of the member of Parliament who began one of his speeches with saying he thanked God that he was born and bred a Presbyterian; on which another took leave to observe that the gentleman must needs be of a most grateful disposition, since he was thankful for such very small matters. The truth is that her pecuniary condition was such that gifts, which might have seemed small enough to others, loomed large to her. Many doubtless were the shifts to which she had to resort to keep her large family going. When her brother was in London on his second mission, he received a letter from her asking him for some fine old linen or cambric dyed with bright colors, such as with all her own art and the aid of good old Uncle Benjamin's memoranda she

had been unable, she said, to mix herself. With this material, she hoped that she and her daughter Jenny, who, with a little of her assistance, had taken to making flowers for the ladies' heads and bosoms with pretty good acceptance, might get something by it worth their pains, if they lived till next spring. Her language was manifestly that of a person whose life had been too pinched to permit her to deal with the future except at very close range. Of course, her request was complied with. The contrast between her situation in life and that of her prosperous and distinguished brother is brought out as clearly as the colors that she vainly sought to emulate in a letter written by her to Deborah, when she hears the rumor that Franklin had been made a Baronet and Governor of Pennsylvania. Signing herself, "Your ladyship's affectionate sister, and obedient humble servant," she wrote:

Dear Sister: For so I must call you, come what will, and if I do not express myself proper, you must excuse it, seeing I have not been accustomed to pay my compliments to Governor and Baronet's ladies. I am in the midst of a great wash, and Sarah still sick, and would gladly be excused writing this post, but my husband says I must write, and give you joy, which we heartily join in.

This was in 1758 when Franklin and other good Americans rarely alluded to England except as "home"; but sixteen years later the feelings of Jane Mecom about baronetcies and colonial governorships had undergone such a change—for she was a staunch patriot—that, when it was stated in a Boston newspaper that it was generally believed that Franklin had been promoted by the English Government to an office of superior importance, he felt that it was necessary to write to her as follows:

But as I am anxious to preserve your good opinion, and as I know your sentiments, and that you must be much afflicted yourself, and even despise me, if you thought me capable of accepting any office from this government, while it is acting with so much hostility towards my native country, I cannot miss this first opportunity of assuring you, that there is not the least foundation for such a report.

You need not [he said on one occasion to Jane] be concern'd, in writing to me, about your bad Spelling; for, in my Opinion, as our Alphabet now Stands, the bad Spelling, or what is call'd so, is generally the best, as conforming to the Sound of the Letters and of the Words. To give you an Instance: A Gentleman receiving a Letter, in which were these Words,—*Not finding Brown at hom, I delivard your meseg to his yf.* The Gentleman finding it bad Spelling, and therefore not very intelligible, called his Lady to help him read it. Between them they pick'd out the meaning of all but the *yf*, which they could not understand. The lady propos'd calling her Chambermaid: for Betty, says she, has the best knack at reading bad Spelling of anyone I know. Betty came, and was surprised, that neither Sir nor Madam could tell what *yf* was. "Why," says she, "yf spells *Wife;* what else can it spell?" And, indeed, it is a much better, as well as shorter method of spelling *Wife*, than by *doubleyou*, *i*, *ef*, *e*, which in reality spells *doubleyifey.*

The affectionate interest felt by Franklin in his sister extended to her husband and children. Some of his letters were written to Jane and Edward Mecom jointly, and he evidently entertained a truly fraternal regard for the latter. The fortunes of the children he endeavored to promote by every means in his power. Benny Mecom was placed by him as an apprentice with his partner in the printing business in New York, Mr. Parker, and one of his most admirable letters is a letter to his sister Jane, already mentioned by us, in which he comments upon a complaint of ill-treatment at the hands of Mr. Parker which Benny had made to her. The wise, kindly and yet

firm language in which he answers one by one the heads of Benny's complaint, which was obviously nothing more than the grumbling of a disaffected boy, lacks nothing but a subject of graver importance to be among the most notable of his letters. On the whole, it was too affectionate and indulgent in tone to have keenly offended even such parental fondness as that which led Poor Richard to ask, in the words of Gay,

> "Where yet was ever found the mother
> Who'd change her booby for another?"

But occasionally there is a sentence or so in it which makes it quite plain that Franklin was entirely too wise not to know that the rod has a function to perform in the management of a boy. Referring to Benny's habit of staying out at night, sometimes all night, and refusing to give an account of where he had spent his time or in what company, he said,

> This I had not heard of before though I perceive you have. I do not wonder at his correcting him for that. If he was my own son I should think his master did not do his duty by him if he omitted it, for to be sure it is the high road to destruction. And I think the correction very light, and not likely to be very effectual, if the strokes left no marks.

In the same letter, there is a sly passage which takes us back to the part of Jacques' homily which speaks of

> "The whining schoolboy with his satchel,
> And shining morning face creeping like snail,
> Unwillingly to school."

> I did not think it anything extraordinary [Franklin said] that he should be sometimes willing to evade going to meeting, for I believe it is the case with all boys, or almost all. I have brought up four or five myself, and have frequently observed that if their shoes were bad they would say nothing of a new

pair till Sunday morning, just as the bell rung, when, if you asked them why they did not get ready, the answer was prepared, "I have no shoes," and so of other things, hats and the like; or, if they knew of anything that wanted mending, it was a secret till Sunday morning, and sometimes I believe they would rather tear a little than be without the excuse.

Franklin had dipped deeply into the hearts of boys as well as men.

When Benny became old enough to enter upon business for himself, his uncle put him in possession of a printing outfit of his own at Antigua with the understanding that Benny was to pay him one third of the profits of the business; the proportion which he usually received in such cases. Apparently there was every promise of success: an established newspaper, no competing printer, high prices and a printer who, whatever his faults, had come to be regarded by Mr. Parker as one of his "best hands." But the curse of Reuben—instability—rested upon Benny. Taking offence at a proposal of his uncle respecting the distribution of the profits of the business, really intended to pave the way, when Benny had conquered his "flighty unsteadiness of temper," to a gift of the whole printing outfit to him, the nephew insisted that his uncle should name some certain price for the outfit, and allow him to pay it off in instalments; for, though he had, he said, a high esteem for his uncle, yet he loved freedom, and his spirit could not bear dependence on any man, though he were the best man living. Provoked by a delay in answering this letter, for which one of Franklin's long journeys was responsible, Benny again wrote to his uncle, stating that he had formed a fixed resolution to leave Antigua, and that nothing that could be said to him would move or shake it. Leave Antigua he did, and, when we next hear of him, it is through a letter from Franklin to Jane in which he tells her that Benjamin had settled his accounts

with him, and paid the balance due him honorably, and had also made himself the owner of the printing outfit which had been shipped back from Antigua to Philadelphia.

From this time on until Benny slid down into the gulf of insolvency, owing his uncle some two hundred pounds, and leaving assets that the latter reckoned would scarce amount to four shillings in the pound, he seems to have had no success of any sort except that of winning the hand of a girl for whom Franklin and Deborah had a peculiar partiality. This was after Benny had returned to Boston and, as a bookseller as well as a printer, had begun life anew with a loan from his uncle, and with good credit.

When he was "near being married" his uncle wrote to Jane:

> I know nothing of that affair, but what you write me, except that I think Miss Betsey a very agreeable, sweet-tempered, good girl, who has had a housewifely education, and will make, to a good husband, a very good wife. Your sister and I have a great esteem for her; and, if she will be kind enough to accept of our nephew, we think it will be his own fault, if he is not as happy as the married state can make him. The family is a respectable one, but whether there be any fortune I know not; and, as you do not inquire about this particular, I suppose you think with me, that where everything else desirable is to be met with, that is not very material.

What Deborah thought of Miss Betsey may be inferred from a postscript that she hastily annexed to this letter: "If Benny will promise to be one of the tenderest husbands in the world, I give my consent. He knows already what I think of Miss Betsey. I am his loving aunt." In a subsequent letter, Franklin wrote to Deborah from London that he was glad that "Ben has got that good girl." Miss Betsey did not prove to be a fortune to her husband,

though she did prove to be such a fruitful wife to him that, when the crash of bankruptcy came, there were a number of small children to be included in his schedule of liabilities. Nor is it easy to see how she or any other woman could prove a fortune to any man of whom such a picture could be sketched as that which Thomas, the author of the *History of Printing*, sketches of Benny as he was shortly after his return from Antigua.

> Benjamin Mecom [writes Thomas] was in Boston several months before the arrival of his press and types from Antigua, and had much leisure. During this interval he frequently came to the house where I was an apprentice. He was handsomely dressed, wore a powdered bob-wig, ruffles, and gloves: gentleman-like appendages, which the printers of that day did not assume—and thus appareled, he would often assist for an hour at the press. . . . I viewed him at the press with admiration. He indeed put on a apron to save his clothes from blacking, and guarded his ruffles. . . . He got the nickname of "Queer Notions" among the printers.

The result of it all was that the patience of the uncle was at last completely worn out. "I can not comprehend," he wrote to Deborah from London, "how so very sluggish a Creature as Ben. Mecom is grown, can maintain in Philadelphia so large a Family. I hope they do not hang upon you: for really as we grow old and must grow more helpless, we shall find we have nothing to spare."

In a subsequent letter to Williams he spoke of his sister's children as if they were all thriftless. If such was the case, it was not because of any lack of interest on his part in them. In a letter, recommending his son William to Jane's motherly care and advice, he says, "My compliments to my new niece, Miss Abiah, and pray her to accept the enclosed piece of gold, to cut her teeth; it may afterwards buy nuts for them to crack." In another letter to his sister, he expresses pleasure at hearing that

her son Peter is at a place where he has full employ. If Peter should get a habit of industry at his new place, the exchange, he said pointedly, would be a happy one. In a later letter to Jane, he declares that he is glad that Peter is acquainted with the crown-soap business and that he hopes that he will always take care to make the soap faithfully and never slight the manufacture, or attempt to deceive by appearances. Then he may boldly put his name and mark, and, in a little time, it will acquire as good a character as that made by his uncle (John) or any other person whatever. He also tells Jane that if Peter will send to Deborah a box of his soap (but not unless it be right good) she would immediately return the ready money to him for it. Many years later his letters to his sister show that he was then aiding her in different ways, and among others by buying soap of her manufacture from her, and that some cakes of this soap were sent by him as gifts to friends of his in France. Indeed, he told Jane that she would do well to instruct her grandson in the art of making that soap. In the same letter that he wrote to her about Peter and the crown-soap he sent his love to her son Neddy, and Neddy's wife, and the rest of Jane's children. Neddy, born like Benny under an unlucky star, had at the time not only a wife but a disorder which his uncle hoped that he would wear out gradually, as he was yet a young man. If Eben, another of Jane's sons, would be industrious and frugal, it was ten to one, his uncle said, that he would get rich; for he seemed to have spirit and activity. As to Johnny, still another of Jane's sons, if he ever set up as a goldsmith, he should remember that there was one accomplishment, without which he could not possibly thrive in that trade; that was perfect honesty. In the latter part of his life, after he had been badly hurt by Benny, and had seen so much of his sound counsel come to nothing, he was slower to give advice to the Mecoms.

Your Grandson [he wrote to Jane, referring to one of her grandsons, who was for a time in his employment at Philadelphia] behaves very well, and is constantly employ'd in writing for me, and will be so some time longer. As to my Reproving and Advising him, which you desire, he has not hitherto appeared to need it, which is lucky, as I am not fond of giving Advice, having seldom seen it taken. An Italian Poet in his Account of a Voyage to the Moon, tells us that

All things lost on Earth are treasur'd there.

on which somebody observ'd, There must then be in the Moon a great deal of *Good Advice.*

Among the letters from Franklin to Jonathan Williams, the elder, is one asking him to lay out for his account the sum of fifty pounds in the purchase of a marriage present for one of Jane's daughters, who thanks him for it in terms that fall little short of ecstacy.

But attached as Franklin was to his sister he did not hesitate to reprove her when reproof was in his judgment necessary. There is such a thing as not caring enough for a person to reprove him. "It was not kind in you," he wrote to her on one occasion, "when your sister commended good works, to suppose she intended it a reproach to you. It was very far from her thoughts." His language was still more outspoken on another occasion when Jane wished him to oust a member of the Franklin connection, with whom she was at odds, from the Post Office to make a place for Benny.

And now [he said] as to what you propose for Benny, I believe he may be, as you say, well enough qualified for it; and, when he appears to be settled, if a vacancy should happen, it is very probable he may be thought of to supply it; but it is a rule with me not to remove any officer, that behaves well, keeps regular accounts, and pays duly; and I think the rule is founded on reason and justice. I have not shown any backwardness to assist Benny, where it could be done without

injuring another. But if my friends require of me to gratify not only their inclinations, but their resentments, they expect too much of me. Above all things I dislike family quarrels, and, when they happen among my relations, nothing gives me more pain. If I were to set myself up as a judge of those subsisting between you and brother's widow and children, how unqualified must I be, at this distance, to determine rightly, especially having heard but one side. They always treated me with friendly and affectionate regard; you have done the same. What can I say between you, but that I wish you were reconciled, and that I will love that side best, that is most ready to forgive and oblige the other? You will be angry with me here, for putting you and them too much upon a footing; but I shall nevertheless be, dear sister, your truly affectionate brother.

Nor did he attempt to disguise his real feelings in a letter which he wrote to Jane near the end of his life in which he told her that her son-in-law, Collas, who kept a store in Carolina, had wished to buy some goods on credit at Philadelphia, but could not do it without his recommendation, which he could not give without making himself pecuniarily liable; and *that* he was not inclined to do, having no opinion either of the honesty and punctuality of the people, with whom Collas proposed to traffic, or of his skill and acuteness in merchandizing. This he wrote, he declared, merely to apologize for any seeming unkindness. The unkindness was but seeming indeed; for the letter also contained these solicitous words:

You always tell me that you live comfortably; but I sometimes suspect that you may be too unwilling to acquaint me with any of your Difficulties from an Apprehension of giving me Pain. I wish you would let me know precisely your Situation, that I may better proportion my Assistance to your Wants. Have you any Money at Interest, and what does it produce? Or do you do some kind of Business for a Living?

Jane seems to have maintained her good humor in the face of every timely reproof of her brother, and other than timely reproofs, we may be sure, there were none. Indeed, she worshipped him so devoutly—devotedly is too feeble an adverb—that there was no need for her at any time in her relations with him to fall back upon her good nature. A few extracts from her letters to Franklin will show how deeply the love and gratitude excited by her brother's ceaseless beneficence sank into her heart.

I am amazed beyond measure [she wrote to Deborah, when she heard of the threatened attack on Franklin's house] that your house was threatened in the tumult. I thought there had been none among you would proceed to such a length to persecute a man merely for being the best of characters, and really deserving good from the hand and tongue of all his fellow creatures. . . . What a wretched world would this be if the vile of mankind had no laws to restrain them.

Additional edge to the indignation, expressed in this letter, was doubtless given by the fact that the writer had just received from her brother, who was then in London, a box containing, among other things, "a printed cotton gown, a quilted coat, a bonnet, a cap, and some ribbons" for herself and each of her daughters.

It is made manifest by other letters than this that her brother's benevolence towards her and her family were quite as active when he was abroad as when he was at home. In 1779, she tells him that, in a letter from him to her, he, like himself, does all for her that the most affectionate brother can be desired or expected to do.

And though [she further said] I feel myself full of gratitude for your generosity, the conclusion of your letter affects me more, where you say you wish we may spend our last days together. O my dear brother, if this could be accomplished, it would give me more joy than anything on this side Heaven could possibly do. I feel the want of a suitable con-

versation— I have but little here. I think I could assume more freedom with you now, and convince you of my affection for you. I have had time to reflect and see my error in that respect. I suffered my diffidence and the awe of your superiority to prevent the familiarity I might have taken with you, and ought, and (which) your kindness to me might have convinced me would be acceptable.

A little later she wrote:

Your very affectionate and tender care of me all along in life excites my warmest gratitude, which I cannot even think on without tears. What manifold blessings I enjoy beyond many of my worthy acquaintance, who have been driven from their home, lost their interest, and some have the addition of lost health, and one the grievous torment of a cancer, and no kind brother to support her, while I am kindly treated by all about me, and ample provision made for me when I have occasion.

As heartfelt was another letter written by her while he was still in France:

Believe me, my dear brother, your writing to me gives me so much pleasure that the great, the very great presents you have sent me are but a secondary joy. I have been very sick this winter at my daughter's; kept my chamber six weeks, but had a sufficiency for my supply of everything that could be a comfort to me of my own, before I received any intimation of the great bounty from your hand, which your letter has conveyed to me, for I have not been lavish of what I before possessed, knowing sickness and misfortunes might happen, and certainly old age; but I shall now be so rich that I may indulge in a small degree a propensity to help some poor creatures who have not the blessing I enjoy. My good fortune came to me altogether to comfort me in my weak state; for as I had been so unlucky as not to receive the letter you sent me through your son Bache's hands, though he informs me he forwarded it immediately. His letter with a draft for twenty five guineas came to my hand just before yours, which I

have received, and cannot find expression suitable to acknowledge my gratitude how I am by my dear brother enabled to live at ease in my old age (after a life of care, labor, and anxiety) without which I must have been miserable.

Most touching of all are the words which she addressed to her brother shortly before his death, "Who that know and love you can bear the thought of surviving you in this gloomy world?" Even after his death, his goodness continued to shield her from want, for by his will he devised to her absolutely the house in Unity Street, Boston, in which she lived, and bequeathed to her an annuity of sixty pounds. By his will, he also bequeathed to her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, living at the time of his decease, in equal shares, fifty pounds sterling; the same amount that he bequeathed to the descendants living at that time of his brother Samuel, his sister Anne Harris, his brother James, his sister Sarah and his sister Lydia, respectively.

As we have seen, Franklin's feelings about Deborah's relatives were hardly less cordial than his feelings about his own. In addition to his mother-in-law, Mrs. Read, and Brother John Read and Sister Read, and Cousin Debbey, and young cousin Johnny Read, two other kinsmen of Deborah, Joseph Read and James Read are mentioned in his letters. Indeed, at one time he even contrived to ward off the Franklins, Mecoms and Davenports from the Post Office long enough to appoint Joseph to the Postmastership at Philadelphia; but James was so unfortunate as to rub against one of the most highly sensitive surfaces of his disposition. In a letter to him, Franklin says, "Your visits never had but one thing disagreeable in them, that is, they were always too short"; but, in a later letter, he assails Read fiercely for surreptitiously obtaining a judgment against Robert Grace, one of the original members of the Junto, and produces a power

of attorney to himself from William Strahan, authorizing him to recover a large sum of money that Read owed Strahan. "Fortune's wheel is often turning," he grimly reminds Read. The whole letter is written with a degree of asperity that Franklin rarely exhibited except when his sense of injustice was highly inflamed, and the circumstances, under which Read secured the judgment, the "little charges," that he had cunningly accumulated on it, and the cordial affection of Franklin for Grace would appear to have fully justified Franklin's stern rebuke and exultant production of Strahan's power of attorney. But everything, it must be confessed, becomes just a little clearer when we learn from a subsequent letter of Franklin to Strahan that, before he received Strahan's power of attorney and account, there had been a misunderstanding between Read and himself,

> occasion'd by his endeavouring to get a small Office from me (Clerk to the Assembly) which I took the more amiss, as we had always been good Friends, and the Office could not have been of much Service to him, the Salary being small; but valuable to me, as a means of securing the Public Business to our Printing House.

The reader will remember that Franklin reserved the right to make full reprisals when anyone undertook to dislodge him from a public office.

Nor, as has been apparent enough, was the interest of Franklin limited to contemporary Franklins. If he had been a descendant of one of the high-bred Washingtons of Northamptonshire—the shire to which the lineage of George Washington, as well as his own, ran back—he could not have been more curious about his descent than he was. "I have ever had pleasure," the opening sentence of the *Autobiography* declares, "in obtaining any little anecdotes of my ancestors." From notes, placed in his hands by his uncle Benjamin, he learned some interesting

particulars about his English forbears. They had resided in the village of Ecton, in Northamptonshire, on the great northern turnpike, sixty-six miles from London, for certainly three hundred years, on a freehold of about thirty acres, and the eldest son of the family had always been bred to the trade of a blacksmith.[1] Perhaps as Parton conjectures, some swart Franklin at the ancestral forge on the little freehold may have tightened a rivet in the armor, or replaced a shoe upon the horse, of a Washington, or doffed his cap to a Washington riding past. From the registers, examined by Franklin, when he visited Ecton, which ended with the year 1755, he discovered that he was the youngest son of the youngest son for five generations back.

One of his letters to Deborah contained much agreeable information about his and her English relations, which he collected at this time. After leaving Cambridge, where his vanity, he said, had been not a little gratified by the particular regard shown him by the chancellor and the vice-chancellor of the university and the heads of colleges, he found on inquiry at Wellingborough that Mary Fisher, the daughter and only child of Thomas Franklin, his father's eldest brother, was still living. He knew that she had lived at Wellingborough, and had been married there about fifty years before to one Richard Fisher, a grazier and tanner, but, supposing that she and her husband were both dead, he had inquired for their posterity.

[1] In sending a MS. to Edward Everett, which he placed in the library of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Thomas Carlyle said: "The poor manuscript is an old Tithes-Book of the parish of Ecton, in Northamptonshire, from about 1640 to 1700, and contains, I perceive, various scattered faint indications of the civil war time, which are not without interest; but the thing which should raise it above all tithe-books yet heard of is, that it contains actual notices, in that fashion, of the ancestors of Benjamin Franklin—blacksmiths in that parish! Here they are—their forge-hammers yet going—renting so many 'yard lands' of Northamptonshire Church-soil—keeping so many sheep, etc., etc.,—little conscious that one of the demi-gods was about to proceed out of them."

I was directed [he says] to their house, and we found them both alive, but weak with age, very glad however to see us. She seems to have been a very smart, sensible woman. They are wealthy, have left off business, and live comfortably. They have had only one child, a daughter, who died, when about thirty years of age, unmarried. She gave me several of my uncle Benjamin's letters to her, and acquainted me where the other remains of the family lived, of which I have, since my return to London, found out a daughter of my father's only sister, very old, and never married. She is a good, clever woman, but poor, though vastly contented with her situation, and very cheerful. The others are in different parts of the country. I intend to visit them, but they were too much out of our tour in that journey.

This was in 1758. Mary Fisher had good reason to be weak with age; for this letter states that she was five years older than Franklin's sister Dowse, and remembered her going away with Franklin's father and his first wife and two other children to New England about the year 1685, or some seventy-three years before Franklin's visit to Wellingborough.

"Where are the old men?
I who have seen much,
Such have I never seen."

Only the truly gray earth, humming, as it revolves on its axis, the derisive song, heard by the fine ear of Emerson, could ask this question, unrebuked by such a stretch of human memory as that. The letter then goes on to say that from Wellingborough the writer passed to Ecton, about three or four miles away, where Franklin's father was born, and where his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather had lived, and how many of the family before them they knew not.

We went first [Franklin tells us] to see the old house and grounds; they came to Mr. Fisher with his wife, and, after

letting them for some years, finding his rent something ill paid, he sold them. The land is now added to another farm, and a school kept in the house. It is a decayed old stone building, but still known by the name of the Franklin House. Thence we went to visit the rector of the parish, who lives close by the church, a very ancient building. He entertained us very kindly, and showed us the old church register, in which were the births, marriages, and burials of our ancestors for two hundred years, as early as his book began. His wife, a goodnatured, chatty old lady (grand-daughter of the famous Archdeacon Palmer, who formerly had that parish, and lived there) remembered a great deal about the family; carried us out into the churchyard, and showed us several of their gravestones, which were so covered with moss, that we could not read the letters, till she ordered a hard brush and basin of water, with which Peter (Franklin's negro servant) scoured them clean, and then Billy (William Franklin) copied them. She entertained and diverted us highly with stories of Thomas Franklin, Mrs. Fisher's father, who was a conveyancer, something of a lawyer, clerk of the county courts and clerk to the Archdeacon in his visitations; a very leading man in all county affairs, and much employed in public business. He set on foot a subscription for erecting chimes in their steeple, and completed it, and we heard them play. He found out an easy method of saving their village meadows from being drowned, as they used to be sometimes by the river, which method is still in being; but, when first proposed, nobody could conceive how it could be; "but however," they said, "if Franklin says he knows how to do it, it will be done." His advice and opinion were sought for on all occasions, by all sorts of people, and he was looked upon, she said, by some, as something of a conjuror. He died just four years before I was born, on the same day of the same month.

The likeness between Thomas and his nephew may have been insufficient under any circumstances justly to suggest the thought of a metempsychosis to William Franklin, but Thomas does seem to have been a kind of

tentative effort upon the part of Nature to create a Benjamin Franklin.

The letter then states that, after leaving Ecton, the party finally arrived at Birmingham where they were soon successful in looking up Deborah's and cousin Wilkinson's and cousin Cash's relations. First, they found one of the Cashes, and he went with them to Rebecca Flint's where they saw her and her husband. She was a turner, and he a button-maker; they were childless and glad to see any person that knew their sister Wilkinson. They told their visitors what letters they had received from America, and even assured them—such are the short and simple annals of the poor—that they had out of respect preserved a keg in which a gift of sturgeon from America had reached them. Then follow certain details about other members of this family connection, commonplace enough, however, to reconcile us to the fact that they have been cut short by the mordant tooth of time which has not spared the remainder of the letter.

On his second mission to England, Franklin paid another visit to these Birmingham relations of his wife, and was in that city for several days. The severest test of a good husband is to ask whether he loves his wife's relations as much as his own. To even this test Franklin appears to have been equal.

Sally Franklin, the daughter of Thomas Franklin, of Lutterworth, a second cousin of Franklin, also flits through the correspondence between Deborah and her husband. When she was about thirteen years of age, her father brought her to London to see Franklin, and Mrs. Stevenson persuaded him to leave the child under her care for a little schooling and improvement, while Franklin was off on one of his periodical tours.

When I return'd [the latter wrote to Deborah] I found her indeed much improv'd, and grown a fine Girl. She is sensible,

and of a sweet, obliging Temper, but is now ill of a violent Fever, and I doubt we shall lose her, which particularly afflicts Mrs. Stevenson, not only as she has contracted a great Affection for the Child, but as it was she that persuaded her Father to leave her there.

Sally, however, settled all doubts by getting well and furnishing future material for Franklin's letters to Deborah. One letter tells Deborah that Sally's father was very desirous that Franklin should take her to America with him; another pays the compliment to Sally, who was at the time in the country with her father, of saying that she is a very good girl; another thanks Deborah for her kind attitude toward her husband's partially-formed resolution of bringing Sally over to America with him; another announces that Sally is again with Mrs. Stevenson; and still another doubtless relieved Deborah of no little uncertainty of mind by informing her that Sally was about to be married to a farmer's son. "I shall miss her," comments Franklin, "as she is nimble-footed and willing to run of Errands and wait upon me, and has been very serviceable to me for some Years, so that I have not kept a Man."

Among Franklin's papers, too, was found at his death a letter from his father to him, beginning "Loving Son," which also makes some valuable contributions to our knowledge of Franklin's forefathers.

As to the original of our name, there is various opinions [says Josiah]; some say that it came from a sort of title, of which a book that you bought when here gives a lively account, some think we are of a French extract, which was formerly called Franks; some of a free line, a line free from that vassalage which was common to subjects in days of old; some from a bird of long red legs. Your uncle Benjamin made inquiry of one skilled in heraldry, who told him there is two coats of armor, one belonging to the Franklins of the North, and one

to the Franklins of the west. However, our circumstances have been such as that it hath hardly been worth while to concern ourselves much about these things any farther than to tickle the fancy a little.

Josiah then has a word to say about his great-grandfather, the Franklin who kept his Bible under a joint stool during the reign of Bloody Mary, and his grandfather. The former, he says, in his travels

went upon liking to a taylor; but he kept such a stingy house, that he left him and travelled farther, and came to a smith's house, and coming on a fasting day, being in popish times, he did not like there the first day; the next morning the servant was called up at five in the morning, but after a little time came a good toast and good beer, and he found good housekeeping there; he served and learned the trade of a smith.

Josiah's grandfather, the letter tells us, was a smith also, and settled in Ecton, and "was imprisoned a year and a day on suspicion of his being the author of some poetry that touched the character of some great man." An ancestry that could boast one sturdy Tubal Cain, ready, though the fires of Smithfield were brightly burning, to hazard his life for his religious convictions, and another, with letters and courage enough to lampoon a great man in England in the sixteenth or the seventeenth century, is an ancestry that was quite worthy of investigation. It at least tickles the fancy a little, to use Josiah's phrase, to imagine that the flame of the Ecton forge lit up, generation after generation, the face of some brawny, honest toiler, not unlike the village blacksmith, whose rugged figure and manly, simple-hearted, God-fearing nature are portrayed with so much dignity and beauty in the well-known verses of Longfellow. Be this as it may, the humble lot of neither ancestral nor contemporary Franklins was a source of mortification to Poor Richard

even after the popularity of his *Almanac* had brought in a pair of shoes, two new shifts, and a new warm petticoat to his wife, and to him a second-hand coat, so good that he was no longer ashamed to go to town or be seen there.

"He that has neither fools nor beggars among his kindred, is the son of a thunder gust," said Poor Richard.

CHAPTER V

Franklin's American Friends

THE friends mentioned in the correspondence between Franklin and Deborah were only some of the many friends with whom Franklin was blessed during the course of his life. He had the same faculty for inspiring friendship that a fine woman has for inspiring love. In reading his general correspondence, few things arrest our attention more sharply than the number of affectionate and admiring intimates, whose lives were in one way or another interwoven with his own, and, over and over again, in reading this correspondence, our attention is unexpectedly drawn for a moment to some cherished friend of his, of whom there is scarcely a hint elsewhere in his writings.

It was from real considerations of practical convenience that he sometimes avoided the serious task of enumerating all the friends, to whom he wished to be remembered, by sending his love to "all [Philadelphia" or "all Pennsylvania."

A dozen of his friends, as we have stated, accompanied him as far as Trenton, when he was on his way to New York to embark upon his first mission abroad in 1757. A cavalcade of three hundred of them accompanied him for sixteen miles to his ship, when he was on his way down the Delaware on his second mission abroad in 1764.

Remember me affectionately to all our good Friends who contributed by their Kindness to make my Voyage com-

fortable [he wrote to Deborah a little later from London]. To Mr. Roberts, Mrs. Thompson, Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Potts, Mrs. Shewell; Messrs. Whartons, Capt. Falkner, Brothers & Sisters Reads & Franklins, Cousin Davenport, and everybody.

When he returned from England in 1762, he was able to write to Strahan with a flush of pardonable exultation that he had had the happiness to find that Dr. Smith's reports of the diminutions of his friends were all false. "My house," he said, "has been full of a succession of them from morning to night, ever since my arrival, congratulating me on my return with the utmost cordiality and affection." And, several years later, when the news reached Philadelphia that he was again safely in England, the bells rang until near midnight, and libations were poured out for his health, success and every other happiness. "Even your old friend Hugh Roberts," said Cadwallader Evans, who gave this information to Franklin, "stayed with us till eleven o'clock, which you know was a little out of his common road, and gave us many curious anecdotes within the compass of your forty years acquaintance." This rejoicing, of course, was, to a considerable degree, the result of political fermentation, and, if we say nothing of other demonstrations, like the flourish of naked swords, which angered the Proprietary so deeply, and made Franklin himself feel just a little foolish, it is only because it is impossible to declare how far these demonstrations were the tributes of personal friendship rather than of public gratitude. In a letter to Doctor Samuel Johnson, of Connecticut, Franklin tells him that he will shortly print proposals for publishing the Doctor's pieces by subscription, and disperse them among his friends "along the continent." This meant much to an author, coming as it did from a man, of whom it might perhaps be said that he could have travelled all the way

from Boston to Virginia without ever being at a loss for the hospitable roof of a friend to shelter him at night.

Nowhere outside of Pennsylvania did Franklin have warmer friends than in New England, the land of his birth. He fled from Boston in 1723, and returned to it on a brief visit in 1724. Aside from other occasional returns, he afterwards revisited it at regular intervals of ten years in 1733, 1743, 1753 and 1763. Many pleasant hours were spent by him among his wayside friends in New England on those postal and other journeys which took him within her borders.

I left New England slowly, and with great reluctance [he wrote to his friend Catherine Ray, afterwards Greene, at Block Island in 1755]. Short day's journeys, and loitering visits on the road, for three or four weeks, manifested my unwillingness to quit a country, in which I drew my first breath, spent my earliest and most pleasant days, and had now received so many fresh marks of the people's goodness and benevolence, in the kind and affectionate treatment I had everywhere met with. I almost forgot I had a *home*, till I was more than half way towards it, till I had, one by one, parted with all my New England friends, and was got into the western borders of Connecticut, among mere strangers. Then, like an old man, who, having buried all he loved in this world, begins to think of heaven, I began to think of and wish for home.

The only drawback to the pleasure of his New England journeys was the vile roads of the time. In a letter to John Foxcroft, in the year 1773, in which he refers to a fall which Foxcroft had experienced, he says, "I have had three of those Squelchers in different Journeys, and never desire a fourth." Two of these squelchers, we know, befell him on the rough roads of New England, in the year 1763; for, in a letter from Boston to his friend Mrs. Catherine Greene (formerly Ray), of that year, he writes to her that he is almost ashamed to say that he has had

another fall, and put his shoulder out. "Do you think, after this," he added, "that even your kindest invitations and Mr. Greene's can prevail with me to venture myself again on such roads?" In August of the same year, Franklin informed Strahan that he had already travelled eleven hundred and forty miles on the American Continent since April, and that he would make six hundred and forty more before he saw home. To this and other postal tours of inspection he owed in part those friends "along the continent," to whom he proposed to appeal in Dr. Johnson's behalf, as well as that unrivalled familiarity with American colonial conditions, which stands out in such clear relief in his works. On one occasion, the accidents by flood and field, to which he was exposed on his American journeys, during the colonial era, resulted in a tie, which, while not the tie of friendship, proved to his cost to be even more lasting than that tie sometimes is. When he was about forty-three years of age, a canoe, in which he was a passenger, was upset near Staten Island, while he was endeavoring to board a stage-boat bound for New York. He was in no danger, as he said to a friend forty years afterwards when recalling the incident, for, besides being near the shore, he could swim like a duck or a Bermudian. But, unfortunately for him, there was a Jew on the stage-boat who chose to believe that he had saved Franklin's life by inducing the stage-boat to stop, and take Franklin in. As far as the latter could learn, he was not more indebted to the Jew than to the Jew's fellow-passengers for being plucked from an element which he never wearied of asserting is not responsible even for bad colds, and, in return for the consideration, that he had received from the stage-boat, he dined all its passengers to their general satisfaction, when he reached New York, at "The Tavern"; but the Jew had no mind to allow the benefaction to sink out of sight for the number of the benefactors.

This Hayes [Franklin wrote to the friend, who had forwarded to him a letter from Hayes' widow] never saw me afterwards, at New York, or Brunswick, or Phila[da] that he did not dun me for Money on the Pretence of his being poor, and having been so happy as to be Instrumental in saving my Life, which was really in no Danger. In this way he got of me some times a double Joannes, sometimes a Spanish Doubloon, and never less; how much in the whole I do not know, having kept no Account of it; but it must have been a very considerable Sum; and he never incurr'd any Risque, nor was at any Trouble in my Behalf, I have long since thought him well paid for any little expence of Humanity he might have felt on the Occasion. He seems, however, to have left me to his Widow as part of her Dowry.

This was about as far as the kindly nature of Franklin ever went in dealing with a beggar or a bore.

In New York or New Jersey, he was little less at home than in Pennsylvania or New England. In a letter to Deborah in 1763, after telling her that he had been to Elizabeth Town, where he had found their children returned from the Falls and very well, he says, "The Corporation were to have a Dinner that day at the Point for their Entertainment, and prevail'd on us to stay. There was all the principal People & a great many Ladies."

As we shall see, the foundations of his New Jersey friendships were laid very early. In following him on his journeys through Maryland, we find him entertained at the country seats of some of the most prominent gentlemen of the Colony, as for instance at Colonel Tasker's and at Mr. Milligan's. He was several times in Virginia in the course of his life, and it is an agreeable thing to a Virginian, who recollects that a Virginian, Arthur Lee, is to be reckoned among the contentious "bird and beast" people, for whom Franklin had such a dislike, to recollect also that not only are Washington and Jefferson to be reckoned among Franklin's loyal and admiring friends, but that,

after Franklin had been a few days in Virginia at Mr. Hunter's, he expressed his opinion of both the country and its people in these handsome terms: "Virginia is a pleasant Country, now in full Spring; the People extreamly obliging and polite." There can be no better corrective of the petty sectional spirit, which has been such a blemish on our national history, and has excited so much wholly unfounded and senseless local prejudice, than to note the appreciation which that open, clear-sighted eye had for all that was best in every part of the American Colonies. "There are brave Spirits among that People," he said, when he heard that the Virginia House of Burgesses had appointed its famous Committee of Correspondence for the purpose of bringing the Colonies together for their common defense. He was never in the Carolinas or Georgia, we believe, though he was for a time the Agent in England of Georgia as well as other Colonies. But he had enough friends in Charleston, at any rate, when he was on his first mission abroad, to write to his Charleston correspondent, Dr. Alexander Garden, the eminent botanist from whom Linnæus borrowed a name for the gardenia, that he purposed, God willing, to return by way of Carolina, when he promised himself the pleasure of seeing and conversing with his friends in Charleston. And to another resident of Charleston, Dr. John Lining, several highly interesting letters of his on scientific subjects were written. For Henry Laurens, of South Carolina, his fellow-commissioner for the purpose of negotiating the treaty of peace with Great Britain, he entertained a warm feeling of esteem and good will which was fully reciprocated by Laurens. It was a just remark of Laurens that Franklin knew very well how to manage a cunning man, but that, when he conversed or treated with a man of candor, there was no man more candid than himself. For Colonel John Laurens, of South Carolina, the son of Henry Laurens, the aide to Wash-

ington, and the intrepid young soldier, who perished in one of the last conflicts of the Revolutionary War, Franklin formed a strong sentiment of affection, when Laurens came to France, at the instance of Washington, for the purpose of obtaining some additional aids from the King for the prosecution of the war. In a letter to him, signed "most affectionately yours," when Laurens was about to return to America, Franklin inclosed him an order for another hundred louis with an old man's blessing. "Take my Blessing with it," he said, "and my Prayers that God may send you safe & well home with your Cargoes. I would not attempt persuading you to quit the military Line, because I think you have the Qualities of Mind and Body that promise your doing great service & acquiring Honour in that Line."[1]

How profound was the mutual respect and affection that Washington and Franklin entertained for each other, we have seen. It is an inspiring thing to note how the words of the latter swell, as with the strains of some heroic measure, when his admiration for the great contemporary, whose services to "the glorious cause" alone exceeded his, lifts him up from the lower to the higher levels of our emotional and intellectual nature.

Should peace arrive after another Campaign or two, and afford us a little Leisure [he wrote to Washington from Passy, on March 5, 1780], I should be happy to see your Excellency in Europe, and to accompany you, if my Age and Strength would permit, in visiting some of its ancient and most famous Kingdoms. You would, on this side of the Sea, enjoy the great Reputation you have acquir'd, pure and free from those little Shades that the Jealousy and Envy of a

[1] The death of John Laurens in an obscure skirmish, almost at the very end of the Revolutionary War, after a brief career, distinguished by rare intellectual promise and daring valor is one of the most painful tragedies of that war. "He had not a fault that I could discover," Washington said of him, "unless it were intrepidity bordering on rashness."

Man's Countrymen and Cotemporaries are ever endeavouring to cast over living Merit. Here you would know, and enjoy, what Posterity will say of Washington. For 1000 Leagues have nearly the same Effect with 1000 Years. The feeble Voice of those grovelling Passions cannot extend so far either in Time or Distance. At present I enjoy that Pleasure for you, as I frequently hear the old Generals of this martial Country (who study the Maps of America, and mark upon them all your Operations) speak with sincere Approbation and great Applause of your conduct; and join in giving you the Character of one of the greatest Captains of the Age.

The caprice of future events might well have deprived these words of some of their rich cadence, but it did not, and, even the voice of cis-Atlantic jealousy and envy seems to be as impotent in the very presence of Washington, as at the distance of a thousand leagues away, when we place beside this letter the words written by Franklin to him a few years later after the surrender of Cornwallis:

All the world agree, that no expedition was ever better planned or better executed; it has made a great addition to the military reputation you had already acquired, and brightens the glory that surrounds your name, and that must accompany it to our latest posterity. No news could possibly make me more happy. The infant Hercules has now strangled the two serpents (the several armies of Burgoyne and Cornwallis) that attacked him in his cradle, and I trust his future history will be answerable.[1]

[1] It may be said of the fame of Washington in his own land, with something like approximate accuracy, that a file of wild geese winging its flight along the Atlantic Seaboard from Maine to the alluvial meadows of the Roanoke in Southern Virginia, is, for but brief periods only out of sight of some statue or monument erected in his honor by his grateful countrymen. The fame of Franklin in America is but little less strikingly attested. As long ago as 1864, Parton could say this of it: "As there are few counties in the Union which have not a town named Franklin, so there are few towns of any magnitude, which do not possess a Franklin Street, or a Franklin Square, a Franklin hotel, a Franklin bank, a Franklin fire-engine, a Frank-

Cordial relations of friendship also existed between Franklin and Jefferson. In their versatility, their love of science, their speculative freedom and their faith in the popular intelligence and conscience the two men had much in common. As members of the committee, that drafted the Declaration of Independence, as well as in other relations, they were brought into familiar contact with each other; and to Jefferson we owe valuable testimony touching matters with respect to which the reputation of Franklin has been assailed, and also a sheaf of capital stories, that helps us to a still clearer insight into the personal and social phases of Franklin's life and character. One of these stories is the famous story of Abbé Raynal and the Speech of Polly Baker, when she was prosecuted the fifth time for having a bastard child.

The Doctor and Silas Deane [Jefferson tells us] were in conversation one day at Passy on the numerous errors in the Abbé's "*Histoire des deux Indes*" when he happened to step in. After the usual salutations, Silas Deane said to him, "The Doctor and myself, Abbé, were just speaking of the errors of fact into which you have been led in your history." "Oh no, Sir," said the Abbé, "that is impossible. I took the greatest care not to insert a single fact, for which I had not the most unquestionable authority." "Why," says Deane, "there is the story of Polly Baker, and the eloquent apology you have put into her mouth, when brought before a court of Massachusetts to suffer punishment under a law which you cite, for having had a bastard. I know there never was such a law in Massachusetts." "Be assured," said the Abbé, "you are mistaken, and that that is a true story. I do not

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lin Lyceum, a Franklin lodge, or a Franklin charitable association. His bust and his portrait are only less universal than those of Washington, and most large cities contain something of the nature of a monument to Franklin." How little this fame has died down since these words were written was seen in the pomp and splendor with which the second centenary of the birth of Franklin was celebrated in the United States and France in 1906.

immediately recollect indeed the particular information on which I quote it; but I am certain that I had for it unquestionable authority." Doctor Franklin, who had been for some time shaking with unrestrained laughter at the Abbé's confidence in his authority for that tale, said, "I will tell you, Abbé, the origin of that story. When I was a printer and editor of a newspaper, we were sometimes slack of news, and to amuse our customers I used to fill up our vacant columns with anecdotes and fables, and fancies of my own, and this of Polly Baker is a story of my making, on one of those occasions." The Abbé, without the least disconcert, exclaimed with a laugh, "Oh, very well, Doctor, I had rather relate your stories than other men's truths."

Another of Jefferson's stories, is the equally famous one of John Thompson, hatter.

When the Declaration of Independence [he says] was under the consideration of Congress, there were two or three unlucky expressions in it which gave offence to some members. The words "Scotch and other foreign auxiliaries" excited the ire of a gentleman or two of that country. Severe strictures on the conduct of the British King, in negativing our repeated repeals of the law which permitted the importation of slaves, were disapproved by some Southern gentlemen, whose reflections were not yet matured to the full abhorrence of that traffic. Although the offensive expressions were immediately yielded, these gentlemen continued their depredations on other parts of the instrument. I was sitting by Doctor Franklin, who perceived that I was not insensible to these mutilations. "I have made it a rule," said he, "whenever in my power, to avoid becoming the draughtsman of papers to be reviewed by a public body. I took my lesson from an incident which I will relate to you. When I was a journeyman printer, one of my companions, an apprentice hatter, having served out his time, was about to open shop for himself. His first concern was to have a handsome signboard, with a proper inscription. He composed it in these words, 'John Thompson, *Hatter*, *makes* and *sells hats* for ready money,'

with a figure of a hat subjoined; but he thought he would submit it to his friends for their amendments. The first he showed it to thought the word '*Hatter*' tautologous, because followed by the words 'makes hats' which showed he was a hatter. It was struck out. The next observed that the word '*makes*' might as well be omitted, because his customers would not care who made the hats. If good and to their mind, they would buy, by whomsoever made. He struck it out. A third said he thought the words '*for ready money*' were useless, as it was not the custom of the place to sell on credit; everyone who purchased expected to pay. They were parted with, and the inscription now stood, 'John Thompson sells hats.' '*Sells hats!*' says his next friend. 'Why nobody will expect you to give them away; what then is the use of that word?' It was stricken out, and '*hats*' followed it, the rather as there was one painted on the board. So the inscription was reduced ultimately to 'John Thompson,' with the figure of a hat subjoined."

The next story has the same background, the Continental Congress.

I was sitting by Doctor Franklin [says Jefferson], and observed to him that I thought we should except books (from the obligations of the non-importation association formed in America to bring England to terms); that we ought not to exclude science, even coming from an enemy. He thought so too, and I proposed the exception, which was agreed to. Soon after it occurred that medicine should be excepted, and I suggested that also to the Doctor. "As to that," said he, "I will tell you a story. When I was in London, in such a year, there was a weekly club of physicians, of which Sir John Pringle was President, and I was invited by my friend Doctor Fothergill to attend when convenient. Their rule was to propose a thesis one week and discuss it the next. I happened there when the question to be considered was whether physicians had, on the whole, done most good or harm? The young members, particularly, having discussed it very learnedly and eloquently till the subject was exhausted,

one of them observed to Sir John Pringle, that although it was not usual for the President to take part in a debate, yet they were desirous to know his opinion on the question. He said they must first tell him whether, under the appellation of physicians, they meant to include *old women*, if they did he thought they had done more good than harm, otherwise more harm than good."

This incident brings back to us, as it doubtless did to Franklin, the augurs jesting among themselves over religion.[1]

It is to be regretted that many other easy pens besides that of Jefferson have not preserved for us some of those humorous stories and parables of which Franklin's memory was such a rich storehouse. Doctor Benjamin Rush, one of his intimate friends, is said to have entertained the purpose of publishing his recollections of Franklin's table-talk. The purpose was never fulfilled, but the scraps of this talk which we find in Dr. Rush's diary are sufficient to show that, even in regard to medicine, Franklin had a stock of information and conclusions which were well worth the hearing.

As a member of the Continental Congress, Franklin was brought into close working intercourse with Charles Carroll of Carrollton, and formed a sincere sentiment of friendship for him, which was strengthened by the expedition that they made together to Canada, as two of the three commissioners appointed by Congress to win the Canadians over to the American cause. Samuel Chase, another Marylander, was the third commissioner, and the three were accompanied by John Carroll, the cousin of Charles Carroll of Carrollton, whose character

[1] Another story about Franklin told by Jefferson is good enough at any rate for a footnote. At parties at the French Court he sometimes had a game of chess with the old Duchess of Bourbon. Happening once to put her king into prize, he took it. "Ah," said she, "we do not take kings so." "We do in America," said he.

as a Catholic priest, it was hoped, would promote the success of the mission. On his way back to Philadelphia, in advance of his fellow-commissioners, Franklin acknowledged in grateful terms the help that he had received on his return journey from the friendly assistance and tender care of this good man, who became his firm friend, and was subsequently made the first Catholic Bishop of America upon his recommendation. William Carmichael, another Marylander, who was for a time the secretary of Silas Deane at Paris, was also one of Franklin's friends. There is a tinge of true affection about his letters to Carmichael, and the latter, in a letter written in the year 1777, while stating that Franklin's age in some measure hindered him from taking so active a part in the drudgery of business as his great zeal and abilities warranted, remarks, "He is the Master to whom we children in politics all look up for counsel, and whose name is everywhere a passport to be well received." When Carmichael was the American Secretary of Legation at Madrid, Franklin still remembered enough of his Spanish to request the former to send him the *Gazette* of Madrid and any new pamphlets that were curious. "I remember the Maxim you mention of Charles V, *Yo y el Tiempo*," he wrote to Carmichael on one occasion, "and have somewhere met with an Answer to it in this distich,

> 'I and time 'gainst any two,
> Chance and I 'gainst Time and you.'

"And I think the Gentlemen you have at present to deal with, would do wisely to guard a little more against certain Chances." In another letter, Franklin, referring to his "Essay on Perfumes," dedicated to the Academy of Brussels, writes to Carmichael, "You do my little Scribblings too much honour in proposing to print them; but they are at your Disposition, except the Letter to the Academy which having several English Puns in it, can not

be translated, and besides has too much *grossièreté* to be borne by the polite Readers of these Nations."

It was in Pennsylvania and New England, however, so far as America was concerned, that Franklin formed the intimate friendships which led him so often to say towards the close of his life, as one old friend after another dropped through the bridge of Mirzah, that the loss of friends is the tax imposed upon us by nature for living too long.

The closest friend of his early youth was his Boston friend, John Collins. The reader has already learnt how soon religious skepticism, drinking and gambling ate out the core of this friend's character.

With his intensely social nature, Franklin had hardly found employment in Philadelphia before in his own language he began to have some acquaintance among the young people of the town, that were lovers of reading, with whom he spent his evenings very agreeably. His first group of friends in Philadelphia was formed before he left Pennsylvania for London in 1724. In his pictorial way—for the *Autobiography* is engraved with a burin rather than written with a pen—Franklin brings the figures of this group before us with admirable distinctness. They were three in number, and all were lovers of reading. Two of them, Charles Osborne and Joseph Watson, were clerks to an eminent conveyancer in Philadelphia, Charles Brogden. The third, James Ralph, who has already been mentioned by us, was clerk to a merchant. Watson was a pious, sensible young man, of great integrity; the others were rather more lax in their principles of religion, particularly Ralph, who, as well as Collins, to quote the precise words of Franklin's confession, had been unsettled by him, "for which," he adds, "they both made me suffer."

Osborne [Franklin continues] was sensible, candid, frank; sincere and affectionate to his friends; but, in literary matters,

too fond of criticising. Ralph was ingenious, genteel in his manners, and extremely eloquent; I think I never knew a prettier talker. Both of them great admirers of poetry, and began to try their hands in little pieces. Many pleasant walks we four had together on Sundays into the woods, near Schuylkill, where we read to one another, and conferr'd on what we read.

Ralph had the most fatal of all gifts for a clever man—the gift of writing poetry tolerably well. Osborne tried to convince him that he had no genius for it, and advised him to stick to mercantile pursuits. Franklin conservatively approved the amusing one's self with poetry now and then so far as to improve one's language, but no farther.

Thus things stood when the friends proposed that each should produce at their next meeting a poetical version of the 18th Psalm. Ralph composed his version, showed it to Franklin, who admired it, and, being satisfied that Osborne's criticisms of his muse were the suggestions of mere envy, asked Franklin to produce it at the next symposium of the friends as his own. Franklin, who had a relish for practical jokes throughout his life, fell in readily with Ralph's stratagem. But we shall let a writer, whose diction is as incompressible as water, narrate what followed in his own lively way:

We met; Watson's performance was read; there were some beauties in it, but many defects. Osborne's was read; it was much better; Ralph did it justice; remarked some faults, but applauded the beauties. He himself had nothing to produce. I was backward; seemed desirous of being excused; had not had sufficient time to correct, etc.; but no excuse could be admitted; produce I must. It was read and repeated; Watson and Osborne gave up the contest, and join'd in applauding it. Ralph only made some criticisms, and propos'd some amendments; but I defended my text. Osborne was against Ralph, and told him he was no better a critic than

poet, so he dropt the argument. As they two went home together, Osborne expressed himself still more strongly in favour of what he thought my production; having restrain'd himself before, as he said, lest I should think it flattery. "But who would have imagin'd," said he, "that Franklin had been capable of such a performance, such painting, such force, such fire! He has even improv'd the original. In his common conversation he seems to have no choice of words; he hesitates and blunders; and yet, good God! how he writes!" When we next met, Ralph discovered the trick we had plaid him, and Osborne was a little laught at.

This transaction fixed Ralph in his resolution of becoming a poet. I did all I could to dissuade him from it, but he continued scribbling verses till *Pope* cured him.[1]

Watson, we are told by Franklin, died in his arms a few years after this incident, much lamented, being the

[1] It may be said of Ralph that few names are surer of immortality than his, though not for the reasons upon which he founded his deceitful hopes. Between the *Autobiography* and the *Dunciad* he is, not unlike a mummy, preserved long beyond the date at which, in the ordinary course of things, he would have been overtaken by oblivion. This is one of the couplets that Pope bestowed upon him in the *Dunciad:*

> "Silence, ye Wolves! While Ralph to Cynthia howls,
> And makes night hideous—answer him, ye owls."

The couplet was accompanied by a still more venomous sting in prose: "James Ralph, a name inserted after the first editions, not known till he writ a swearing-piece called *Sawney*, very abusive of Dr. Swift, Mr. Gay, and myself. These lines allude to a thing of his entitled *Night*, a poem. This low writer attended his own works with panegyrics in the Journals, and once in particular praised himself highly above Mr. Addison, in wretched remarks upon that author's account of English poets, printed in a London Journal, September, 1728. He was wholly illiterate and knew no language, not even French. Being advised to read the rules of dramatic poetry before he began a play, he smiled and replied 'Shakspeare writ without rules.' He ended at last in the common sink of all such writers, a political newspaper, to which he was recommended by his friend Arnal, and received a small pittance for pay; and being detected in writing on both sides on one and the same day, he publicly justified the morality of his conduct." Another couplet of the *Dunciad* is this:

> "And see! the very Gazetteers give o'er,
> Ev'n Ralph repents, and Henley writes no more."

best of their set. Osborne went to the West Indies, where he became an eminent lawyer, and made money, but died young. "He and I," observes Franklin, "had made a serious agreement, that the one who happen'd first to die should, if possible, make a friendly visit to the other, and acquaint him how he found things in that separate state. But he never fulfill'd his promise."

This group of friends was succeeded on Franklin's return from London by the persons who constituted with him the original members of the Junto: Joseph Breintnal, "a copyer of deeds for the scriveners," Thos. Godfrey, the mathematical precisian, for whom Franklin had so little partiality, Nicholas Scull, "a surveyor, afterwards Surveyor-general, who lov'd books, and sometimes made a few verses," William Parsons, "bred a shoemaker, but, loving reading, had acquir'd a considerable share of mathematics, which he first studied with a view to astrology, that he afterwards laught at," William Maugridge, "a joiner, a most exquisite mechanic, and a solid, sensible man," Hugh Meredith, Stephen Potts, and George Webb, journeymen printers, Robert Grace, "a young gentleman of some fortune, generous, lively, and witty; a lover of punning and of his friends," and William Coleman, then a merchant's clerk about Franklin's age, who had the coolest, clearest head, the best heart, and the exactest morals, Franklin declares, of almost any man he ever met with. Coleman subsequently became a merchant of great note, and a provincial judge; and the friendship between Franklin and himself continued without interruption until Coleman's death, a period of more than forty years. Like Scull, Parsons also became Surveyor-General. The reader will remember how, partly inspired by his affection for Robert Grace, and partly by resentment over a small office, Franklin applied the sharp edge of the *lex talionis* to Jemmy Read. How both Coleman and Grace came

to the aid of Franklin in an hour of dire distress, we shall see hereafter.

Such letters from Franklin to Parsons, as have survived, bear the marks of intimate friendship. In one to him, when he was in command of a company at Easton, dated December 15, 1755, in which reference is made to arms and supplies, that had been forwarded for the defence of that town against the Indians, Franklin says, "Be of good Courage, and God guide you. Your Friends will never desert you." Four of the original members of the Junto were among the first members of the Philosophical Society, established by Franklin, Parsons, as Geographer, Thomas Godfrey, as Mathematician, Coleman as Treasurer, and Franklin himself as Secretary. Parsons died during the first mission of Franklin to England, and, in a letter to Deborah the latter comments on the event in these words: "I regret the Loss of my Friend Parsons. Death begins to make Breaches in the little Junto of old Friends, that he had long forborne, and it must be expected he will now soon pick us all off one after another." In another letter, written some months later to Hugh Roberts, a member of the Junto, but not one of the original members, he institutes a kind of Plutarchian contrast between Parsons and Stephen Potts, who is described in the *Autobiography* as a young countryman of full age, bred to country work, of uncommon natural parts, and great wit and humor, but a little idle.

> Two of the former members of the Junto you tell me [he said] are departed this life, Potts and Parsons. Odd characters both of them. Parsons a wise man, that often acted foolishly; Potts a wit, that seldom acted wisely. If *enough* were the means to make a man happy, one had always the *means* of happiness, without ever enjoying the *thing;* the other had always the *thing*, without ever possessing the *means*. Parsons, even in his prosperity, always fretting; Potts, in the midst of his poverty, ever laughing. It seems, then, that

happiness in this life rather depends on internals than externals; and that, besides the natural effects of wisdom and virtue, vice and folly, there is such a thing as a happy or an unhappy constitution. They were both our friends, and loved us. So, peace to their shades. They had their virtues as well as their foibles; they were both honest men, and that alone, as the world goes, is one of the greatest of characters. They were old acquaintances, in whose company I formerly enjoyed a great deal of pleasure, and I cannot think of losing them, without concern and regret.

The Hugh Roberts to whom this letter was written was the Hugh Roberts, who found such pleasure in the glad peal of bells, that announced the safe arrival of Franklin in England, and in his reminiscences of his friend of forty years' standing, that he quite forgot that it was his rule to be in bed by eleven o'clock. He was, if Franklin may be believed, an eminent farmer, which may account for the early hours he kept; and how near he was to Franklin the affectionate tone of this very letter abundantly testifies. After expressing his grief because of their friend Syng's loss of his son, and the hope that Roberts' own son might be in every respect as good and useful as his father (than which he need not wish him more, he said) Franklin takes Roberts gently to task for not attending the meetings of the Junto more regularly.

I do not quite like your absenting yourself from that Good old club, the Junto. Your more frequent presence might be a means of keeping them from being all engaged in measures not the best for public welfare. I exhort you, therefore, to return to your duty; and, as the Indians say, to confirm my words, I send you a Birmingham tile. I thought the neatness of the figures would please you.

Even the Birmingham tile, however, did not have the effect of correcting Roberts' remissness, for in two subsequent letters Franklin returns to the same subject. In

the first, he tells Roberts that he had received his letter by the hands of Roberts' son in London, and had had the pleasure withal of seeing this son grow up a solid, sensible young man. He then reverts to the Junto. "You tell me you sometimes visit the ancient Junto. I wish you would do it oftener. I know they all love and respect you, and regret your absenting yourself so much. People are apt to grow strange, and not understand one another so well, when they meet but seldom." Then follow these words which help us to see how he came to declare so confidently on another occasion that, compared with the entire happiness of existence, its occasional unhappiness is but as the pricking of a pin.

Since we have held that Club, till we are grown grey together, let us hold it out to the End. For my own Part, I find I love Company, Chat, a Laugh, a Glass, and even a Song, as well as ever; and at the same Time relish better than I used to do the grave Observations and wise Sentences of old Men's Conversation; so that I am sure the Junto will be still as agreeable to me as it ever has been. I therefore hope it will not be discontinu'd, as long as we are able to crawl together.

The second of the two letters makes still another appeal of the same nature.

I wish [Franklin said] you would continue to meet the Junto, notwithstanding that some Effects of our publick political Misunderstandings may sometimes appear there. 'Tis now perhaps one of the *oldest* Clubs, as I think it was formerly one of the *best*, in the King's Dominions. It wants but about two years of Forty since it was establish'd. We loved and still love one another; we are grown Grey together, and yet it is too early to Part. Let us sit till the Evening of Life is spent. The Last Hours are always the most joyous. When we can stay no longer, 'tis time enough then to bid each other good Night, separate, and go quietly to bed.

When even the bed of death could be made to wear this smooth and peaceful aspect by such a genial conception of existence, it is not surprising that Catherine Shipley, a friend of later date, should have asked Franklin to instruct her in the art of procuring pleasant dreams. It was in this letter, too, that he told Roberts that he was pleased with his punning, not merely because he liked punning in general, but because he learned from the use of it by Roberts that he was in good health and spirits. Of Hugh Roberts it needs to be only further said that he was one of Franklin's many friends who did what they could by courteous offices, when Franklin was abroad, to testify that they loved him too much to be unmindful that he had left a family behind him entitled to their protection and social attentions. For his visits to his family Franklin sometimes thanks him.

The Philip Syng mentioned in one of the letters to Hugh Roberts was another Philadelphia crony of Franklin's. He was enough of an electrician to be several times given due credit by the unhesitating candor of Franklin for ideas which the public would otherwise, perhaps, have fathered upon Franklin himself, who was entirely too careless about his own fine feathers to have any desire for borrowed plumage.

Samuel Rhoads, also, was one of the intimate Philadelphia friends to whom Franklin was in the habit of sending his love. He, too, was an original member of the Philosophical Society established by Franklin and was set down as "Mechanician" on its roll of membership. At any rate, even if "Mechanician" was a rather pompous term for him, as "Geographer" was for William Parsons, the surveyor, he was enough of a builder to warrant Franklin in imparting to him many valuable points about the construction of houses, which were brought to the former's attention when he was abroad. A striking proof, perhaps, of the strength of the attachment between

the two is found in the fact that Rhoads built the new residence, previously mentioned by us, for Franklin without a rupture in their friendship; although there appears to have been enough of the usual provoking delays to cause Franklin no little dissatisfaction.

Rhoads was a man of considerable public importance in his time. He enjoyed the distinction of being one of the founders of the Pennsylvania Hospital, a conspicuous member of the Assembly of Pennsylvania, and a Mayor of Philadelphia.

He was one, too, of the Committee of the Assembly which audited Franklin's accounts as the Agent of the Colony upon the latter's return from England in 1762, and he was likewise a member of the Committee which had previously reported that the estates of the Proprietaries in Pennsylvania were not being unfairly taxed. In one of Franklin's letters to him, there is a humorous reference to Rhoads' political career. "I congratulate you," he said, "on Your Retirement, and you being able to divert yourself with farming; 'tis an inexhaustible source of perpetual Amusement. Your Country *Seat* is of a more secure kind than *that* in the Assembly: and I hope not so much in the Power of the Mob to jostle you out of."

A golden sentence in this letter is one of the best that Franklin ever penned. "As long as I have known the World I have observ'd that Wrong is always growing more Wrong till there is no bearing it, and that right however oppos'd, comes right at last."

Rhoads, Syng and Roberts were all three included with Luke Morris, another old friend and an *et cetera*, intended to embrace other friends besides, in a letter which Franklin wrote from Passy to Dr. Thomas Bond.

I thank you [he said] for the pleasing account you give me of the health and welfare of my old friends, Hugh Roberts, Luke Morris, Philip Syng, Samuel Rhoads, &c., with the

same of yourself and family. Shake the old ones by the hand for me, and give the young ones my blessing. For my own part, I do not find that I grow any older. Being arrived at seventy, and considering that by travelling further in the same road I should probably be led to the grave, I stopped short, turned about, and walked back again; which having done these four years, you may now call me sixty-six.

Dr. Thomas Bond, the Physician of the Philosophical Society established by Franklin, to whom this letter was written, was also one of Franklin's life-long friends. He was the Doctor Bond, who found that he could make no headway with his hospital project until it was encouraged by a *ça ira* from Franklin, something like that which he is said to have uttered many years afterwards in France when the issue of the American Revolution was uncertain. For the society of physicians and liberal-minded clergymen Franklin had a peculiar partiality. To the one class he was attracted by both the scientific and humanitarian nature of their profession, to say nothing of the incessant intercourse with their fellow creatures, which makes all physicians more or less men of the world; and to the questioning spirit of the eighteenth century he was too true not to have a natural affinity for clergymen of the latitudinarian type. The ties between Dr. Thomas Bond, Dr. John Bard and Dr. Benjamin Rush and himself were very close. He had such a high opinion of Dr. Bond's pills that on one occasion he even writes to his wife from Virginia to send him some by post. On another occasion, when he was in England, he tells Deborah to thank Dr. Bond for the care that he takes of her. In a letter to the Doctor himself, he remarks that he did not know why their school of physic in Philadelphia should not soon be equal to that in Edinburgh, an observation which seemed natural enough to later Philadelphians when it was not only considered throughout the United

States a high compliment to say of a man that he was as clever as a Philadelphia lawyer, but a medical education was in a large part of the United States deemed incomplete unless it had received the finishing touch from the clinics of that city.

When Dr. John Bard removed to New York, where he became the first President of the New York Medical Society, Franklin stated in a letter to Cadwallader Colden that he esteemed Dr. Bard an ingenious physician and surgeon, and a discreet, worthy and honest man. In a letter to Dr. Bard and his wife in 1785, he used these tender words: "You are right in supposing, that I interest myself in everything that affects you and yours, sympathizing in your afflictions, and rejoicing in your felicities; for our friendship is ancient, and was never obscured by the least cloud."

Dr. Rush was such a fervid friend and admirer of Franklin that the latter found it necessary to request him, if he published his discourse on the Moral Sense, to omit totally and suppress that most extravagant encomium on his friend Franklin, which hurt him exceedingly in the unexpected hearing, and would mortify him beyond conception if it should appear from the press. The doctor replied by saying that he had suppressed the encomium, but had taken the liberty of inscribing the discourse to Franklin by a simple dedication, and earnestly insisted upon the permission of his friend to send his last as he did his first publication into the world under the patronage of his name. In the "simple" dedication, the panegyric, which had made Franklin so uncomfortable, was moderated to such an extent that no character was ascribed to him more transcendent than that of the friend and benefactor of mankind.

To Dr. Rush we are under obligations for several stories about Franklin. He tells us that, when chosen by Congress to be one of our Commissioners to France, Franklin

turned to him, and remarked: "I am old and good for nothing; but, as the storekeepers say of their remnants of cloth, 'I am but a fag end, and you may have me for what you please.'" No one doubts now that for the purpose of the French mission he was by far the best piece of goods in the shop. Another story, which came to Dr. Rush at second hand, sounds apocryphal. "Why do you wear that old coat today?" asked Silas Deane of Franklin, when they were on their way to sign the Treaty of Alliance with France. Deane referred to the coat, in which Franklin was clad, when Wedderburn made the rabid attack on him before the Privy Council, to which we shall refer later. "To give it its revenge," was the reply. Franklin may have said that, but it was not like him to say anything of the sort.

But we get back to the domain of unquestionable authenticity when we turn to Dr. Rush's account of Franklin's death-bed:

> The evening of his life was marked by the same activity of his moral and intellectual powers which distinguished its meridian. His conversation with his family upon the subject of his dissolution was free and cheerful. A few days before he died, he rose from his bed and begged that it might be made up for him so *that he might die in a decent manner.* His daughter told him that she hoped he would recover and live many years longer. He calmly replied, "*I hope not.*" Upon being advised to change his position in bed, that he might breathe easy, he said, "*A dying man can do nothing easy.*" All orders and bodies of people have vied with each other in paying tributes of respect to his memory.

A Philadelphia friend, for whom Franklin entertained a peculiar affection, was John Bartram, the botanist. "Our celebrated Botanist of Pennsylvania," Franklin deservedly terms him in a letter to Jan Ingenhousz. In one letter Franklin addresses him as "My ever dear friend," in another as "My good and dear old friend"

and in another as "My dear good old friend." In 1751, Bartram published his *Observations on the Inhabitants, Climate, Soil, Rivers, Productions, Animals, and other Matters worthy of Notice. Made by Mr. John Bartram in his Travels from Pensilvania to Onondaga, Oswego, and the Lake Ontario, in Canada*, and, in a letter to Jared Eliot, Franklin, after mentioning the fact that Bartram corresponded with several of the great naturalists in Europe, and would be proud of an acquaintance with him, said: "I make no Apologies for introducing him to you; for, tho' a plain illiterate Man, you will find he has Merit." "He is a Man of no Letters, but a curious Observer of Nature," was his statement in a subsequent letter to the same correspondent. Through the mediation of Franklin, Bartram was made the American botanist to the King, and given a pension for the fearless and tireless search for botanical specimens, which he had prosecuted, when American forest, savannah and everglade were as full of death as the berry of the nightshade. It was the thought of what he had hazarded that led Franklin to write to him in 1769: "I wish you would now decline your long and dangerous peregrinations in search of new plants, and remain safe and quiet at home, employing your leisure hours in a work that is much wanted, and which no one besides is so capable of performing; I mean the writing a Natural History of our country." The pension meant so much to Bartram that he found difficulty in assuring himself that it would last. In one letter, Franklin tells him that he imagines that there is no doubt but the King's bounty to him would be continued, but he must continue on his part to send over now and then a few such curious seeds as he could procure to keep up his claim. In another letter, he tells him that there is no instance in the then King's reign of a pension once granted ever being taken away, unless for some great offence. Franklin himself was first of all a sower of seed, of that seed

which produces the wholesome plants of benevolence and utility; so it seems quite in keeping to find him, when he was absent from America, maintaining a constant interchange of different sorts of seed with Bartram. If Bartram chooses to try the seed of naked oats and Swiss barley, six rows to one ear, he can get some, Franklin writes, by calling on Mrs. Franklin. In another letter, he acknowledges the receipt of seeds from Bartram, and, in return for it, sends him some of the true rhubarb seed which he desires; also some green dry peas, highly esteemed in England as the best for making pea soup; and also some caravances or beans, of which a cheese was made in China. Strangely enough, he could learn nothing about the seed of the lucerne or alfalfa plant, one of the oldest of forage plants, for which Bartram wrote. Later, he sends Bartram a small box of upland rice, brought from Cochin China, and also a few seeds of the Chinese tallow tree.

Another particular friend of Franklin was John Hughes of Philadelphia. This is the Hughes, out of whose debt as a correspondent Franklin, when in England, found it impossible to keep. He was a man of considerable political importance, for he served on the Committee of the Assembly, which was charged with the expenditure of the £60,000 appropriated by the Assembly, after Braddock's defeat, mainly for the defence of the Province, and on the Committee of the Assembly, which audited Franklin's accounts after his return from England in 1762; and was also one of the delegates appointed by the Assembly to confer with Teedyuscung, the King of the Delawares, at Easton in 1756. Even when Franklin, his party associate, was defeated as a candidate for re-election to the Assembly in 1764, Hughes contrived to clamber back into his own seat. The departure for England of Franklin, shortly after this election, was the signal for the most venomous of all the attacks made upon

him by the class of writers which he happily termed "bug-writers"; that is, writers, to use his words, who resemble "those little dirty stinking insects, that attack us only in the dark, disturb our Repose, molesting and wounding us, while our Sweat and Blood are contributing to their Subsistence." But the friendship of Hughes was equal to the emergency. Incensed at the outrageous nature of the attack, he published a card over his signature, in which he promised that, if Chief Justice Allen, or any gentleman of character, would undertake to justify the charges against Franklin, he would pay £10 to the Hospital for every one of these charges that was established; provided that the person, who made them, would pay £5 for every false accusation against Franklin that he disproved. The assailants endeavored to turn Hughes' challenge into ridicule by an anonymous reply, but Hughes rejoined with a counter-reply above his own signature, in which, according to William Franklin, he lashed them very severely for their baseness. This brought on a newspaper controversy, which did not end, until Chief Justice Allen, who was drawn into its vortex, was enraged to find that it had cost him £25. Later, the recommendation of Hughes by Franklin, as the Stamp Distributor for Pennsylvania and the Counties of New Castle, Kent and Sussex, gave the worst shock to the popularity of the latter that it ever received. The fierce heat that colonial resentment kindled under the hateful office proved too much for even such a resolute incumbent as Hughes, but he was not long in finding a compensation in the somewhat lower temperature of the office of Collector of Customs for the Colonies, which he held until his death.

Thomas Hopkinson, of Philadelphia, too, was one of Franklin's particular friends. He shared his enthusiasm for electrical experiments, and was the first President of the Philosophical Society established by him. With his

usual generosity, Franklin took pains in a note to one of his scientific papers to publish the fact that the power of points to *throw off* the electrical fire was first communicated to him by this friend, then deceased. Nor did he stop there, but referred to him at the same time as a man "whose virtue and integrity, in every station of life, public and private, will ever make his Memory dear to those who knew him, and knew how to value him." There is an amusing reference to Hopkinson in the *Autobiography* in connection with the occasion on which Franklin himself was so transported by Whitefield's eloquence as to empty his pockets, gold and all, into the collector's dish. Disapproving of Whitefield's desire to establish an orphan asylum in Georgia, and suspecting that subscriptions would be solicited by him for that object, and yet distrusting his own capacity to resist a preacher, by whom, in the language of Isaiah, the hearts of the people were stirred, as the trees of the wood are stirred with the wind, he took the precaution of emptying his pockets before he left home. But Whitefield's pathos was too much for him also. Towards the conclusion of the discourse, he felt a strong desire to give, and applied to a Quaker neighbor, who stood near him, to borrow some money for the purpose. The application was unfortunately made, the *Autobiography* says, to perhaps the only man in the company who had the firmness not to be affected by the preacher. His answer was, "*At any other time, Friend Hopkinson, I would lend to thee freely; but not now, for thee seems to be out of thy right senses.*"

Anyone who enjoyed Franklin's friendship experienced very little difficulty in passing it on to his son at his death. Francis Hopkinson, the son of Thomas Hopkinson, is one example of this. Franklin's letters to him are marked by every indication of affection, and he bequeathed to him all his philosophical instruments in Philadelphia, and made him one of the ex-

ecutors of his will with Henry Hill, John Jay and Mr. Edward Duffield, of Benfield, in Philadelphia County. In doing so, with his happy faculty for such things he managed to pay a twofold compliment to both father and son in one breath. After expressing in a letter to Francis Hopkinson his pleasure that Hopkinson had been appointed to the honorable office of Treasurer of Loans, he added: "I think the Congress judg'd rightly in their Choice, and Exactness in accounts and scrupulous fidelity in matters of Trust are Qualities for which your father was eminent, and which I was persuaded was inherited by his Son when I took the liberty of naming him one of the Executors of my Will." Franklin even had a mild word of commendation for Hopkinson's political squibs, some of which, when on their way across the ocean to him, fell into the hands of the British along with Henry Laurens. The captors, it is safe to say, attached very different degrees of importance to the two prizes, and Hopkinson himself accepted the situation with the cheerful observation, "They are heartily welcome to any performance of mine in that way. I wish the dose was stronger and better for their sake." Several of the letters from Franklin to Francis Hopkinson bring out two of the most winning traits of the writer, his ability to find a sweet kernel under every rind however bitter, and his aversion to defamation, which led him to say truthfully on one occasion that between abusing and being abused he would rather be abused.

As to the Friends and Enemies you just mention [he declared in one of them], I have hitherto, Thanks to God, had Plenty of the former kind; they have been my Treasure; and it has perhaps been of no Disadvantage to me, that I have had a few of the latter. They serve to put us upon correcting the Faults we have, and avoiding those we are in danger of having. They counteract the Mischief Flattery might do us, and their Malicious Attacks make our Friends more zealous in serving

us, and promoting our Interest. At present, I do not know of more than two such Enemies that I enjoy, viz. Lee and Izard. I deserved the Enmity of the latter, because I might have avoided it by paying him a Compliment, which I neglected. That of the former I owe to the People of France, who happen'd to respect me too much and him too little; which I could bear, and he could not. They are unhappy, that they cannot make everybody hate me as much as they do; and I should be so, if my Friends did not love me much more than those Gentlemen can possibly love one another.

Every ugly witch is but a transfigured princess. This idea is one that was readily adopted by Franklin's amiable philosophy of life. The thought that enemies are but wholesome mortifications for the pride of human flesh is a thought that he often throws out in his letters to other persons besides Hopkinson. In one to the gallant Col. Henry Bouquet, who was also, it may be said in passing, a warm friend of Franklin, the pen of the latter halts for a moment to parenthesize the fact that God had blessed him with two or three enemies to keep him in order.

But there were few facts in which Franklin found more satisfaction than the fact that all his enemies were mere political enemies, that is to say, enemies like Dr. William Smith, who shot poisoned arrows at him, when he was living, and fired minute guns over his grave, when he was dead.

You know [he wrote to his daughter Sally from Reedy Island, when he was leaving America on his second mission to England], I have many enemies, all indeed on the public account (for I cannot recollect that I have in a private capacity given just cause of offence to any one whatever), yet they are enemies, and very bitter ones; and you must expect their enmity will extend in some degree to you, so that your slightest indiscretions will be magnified into crimes, in order the more sensibly to wound and afflict me.

The same distinction between personal and political hostility is drawn by him in a letter to John Jay of a much later date in which he uses the only terms of self-approval, so far as we can recollect, that a biographer might prefer him never to have employed.

I have [he said], as you observe, some enemies in England, but they are my enemies as an *American;* I have also two or three in America; who are my enemies as a *Minister;* but I thank God there are not in the whole world any who are my Enemies as a *Man;* for by his grace, thro' a long life, I have been enabled so to conduct myself, that there does not exist a human Being who can justly say, "Ben. Franklin has wrong'd me." This, my friend, is in old age a comfortable Reflection.

In one of the letters to Hopkinson, mentioned by us, he tells Hopkinson that he does well to refrain from newspaper abuse. He was afraid, he declared, to lend any American newspapers in France until he had examined and laid aside such as would disgrace his countrymen, and subject them among strangers to a reflection like that used by a gentleman in a coffee-house to two quarrelers, who, after a mutually free use of the words, *rogue, villain, rascal, scoundrel,* etc., seemed as if they would refer their dispute to him. "I know nothing of you, or your Affair," said he; "I only perceive *that you know one another.*"

The conductor of a newspaper, he thought, should consider himself as in some degree the guardian of his country's reputation, and refuse to insert such writings as might hurt it. If people will print their abuses of one another, let them do it in little pamphlets, and distribute them where they think proper, instead of troubling all the world with them, he suggested. In expressing these sentiments, Franklin was but preaching what he had actually practised in the management of the *Pennsylvania Gazette.* This fact imparts additional authority to

the pungent observations on the liberty of the press contained in one of the last papers that he ever wrote, namely, his *Account of the Supreme Court of Judicature in Pennsylvania, viz: the Court of the Press.* In this paper, he arraigns the license of the press in his half-serious, half-jocular fashion with undiminished vigor, and ends with the recommendation to the Legislature that, if the right of retaliation by the citizen was not to be left unregulated, it should take up the consideration of both liberties, that of the press and that of the cudgel, and by an explicit law mark their extent and limits.

Doctor Cadwallader Evans of Philadelphia was also on a sufficiently affectionate footing with Franklin for the latter to speak of him as his "good old friend." When news of his death reached Franklin in London in 1773, the event awakened a train of reflection in his mind which led him to write to his son that, if he found himself on his return to America, as he feared he would do, a stranger among strangers, he would have to go back to his friends in England.

Dr. Evans' idea of establishing a medical library at the Hospital was so grateful to Franklin's untiring public spirit that, as soon as he heard of it from Dr. Evans, he sent him at once the only medical book that he had, and took steps to solicit other donations of such books for the purpose in England. There are some instructive observations on political and medical subjects in his earlier letters to Dr. Evans, but his later ones are mainly given over to the movement for the production of silk in Pennsylvania in which Dr. Evans was deeply interested. The industry, intelligence and enthusiasm with which Franklin seconded his efforts to make the exotic nursling a success is one of the many laudable things in his career.

Another close friend of Franklin was Abel James, a Quaker, and an active member of the society in Pennsylvania for the manufacture of silk, or the Filature, as it

was called. When he returned to England in 1764, Abel James, Thomas Wharton and Joseph Galloway were the friends who were so loath to part with him that they even boarded his ship at Chester, and accompanied him as far as New Castle. The enduring claim of James upon the attention of posterity consists in the fact that he was so lucky, when the books and papers, entrusted by Franklin to the care of Joseph Galloway were raided, as to recover the manuscript of the first twenty-three pages of the *Autobiography*, which brought the life of Franklin down to the year 1730. Subsequently he sent a copy to "his dear and honored friend," with a letter urging him to complete the work. "What will the world say," he asked, "if kind, humane and benevolent Ben. Franklin should leave his friends and the world deprived of so pleasing and profitable a work; a work which would be useful and entertaining not only to a few, but to millions?"

The names of Thomas Wharton and Samuel Wharton, two Philadelphia friends of Franklin, are more than once coupled together in Franklin's letters. Thomas Wharton was a partner of Galloway and Goddard in the establishment of the *Philadelphia Chronicle*. It was his woollen gown that Franklin found such a comfortable companion on his winter voyage. He would seem to have been the same kind of robust invalid as the neurasthenic who insisted that he was dying of consumption until he grew so stout that he had to refer his imaginary ill-health to dropsy.

Our friend W— [Franklin wrote to Dr. Evans], who is always complaining of a constant fever, looks nevertheless fresh and jolly, and does not fall away in the least. He was saying the other day at Richmond, (where we were together dining with Governor Pownall) that he had been pestered with a fever almost continually for these three years past, and that it gave way to no medicines, all he had taken, advised by different physicians, having never any effect towards removing it.

On which I asked him, if it was not now time to inquire, whether he had really any fever at all. He is indeed the only instance I ever knew, of a man's growing fat upon a fever.

It was with the assistance of Thomas Wharton that Thomas Livezy, a Pennsylvania Quaker, sent Franklin a dozen bottles of wine, made of the "small wild grape" of America, accompanied by a letter, which Franklin with his *penchant* for good stories, must have enjoyed even more than the wine. Referring to the plan of converting the government of Pennsylvania from a Proprietary into a Royal one, Livezy wrote that, if it was true that there would be no change until the death of Thomas Penn, he did not know but that some people in the Province would be in the same condition as a German's wife in his neighborhood lately was "who said nobody could say she wished her husband dead, but said, she wished she could see how he would look when he was dead." "I honestly confess," Livezy went on to say, "I do not wish him (Penn) to die against his will, but, if he could be prevailed on to die for the good of the people, it might perhaps make his name as immortal as Samson's death did his, and gain him more applause here than all the acts which he has ever done in his life."

The humor of Franklin's reply, if humor it can be termed, was more sardonic.

The Partizans of the present [he said] may as you say flatter themselves that such Change will not take place, till the Proprietor's death, but I imagine he hardly thinks so himself. Anxiety and uneasiness are painted on his brow and the woman who would like to see how he would look when dead, need only look at him while living.

With Samuel Wharton, Franklin was intimate enough to soothe his gout-ridden feet with a pair of "Gouty Shoes" given or lent to him by Wharton. This Wharton

was with him one of the chief promoters of the Ohio settlement, of which the reader will learn more later, and the project was brought near enough to success by Franklin for his over-zealous friends to sow the seeds of what might have been a misunderstanding between him and Wharton, if Franklin had not been so healthy-minded, by claiming that the credit for the prospective success of the project would belong to Wharton rather than to Franklin. But, as Franklin said, many things happen between the cup and the lip, and enough happened in this case to make the issue a wholly vain one. Subsequently we know that Franklin in one letter asked John Paul Jones to remember him affectionately to Wharton and in another referred to Wharton as a "particular friend of his." His feelings, it is needless to say, underwent a decided change when later the fact was brought to his attention that Wharton had converted to his own use a sum of money placed in his hands by Jan Ingenhousz, one of the most highly-prized of all Franklin's friends.

There is a thrust at Parliament in a letter from Franklin to Samuel Wharton, written at Passy, which is too keen not to be recalled. He is describing the Lord George Gordon riots, during which Lord Mansfield's house was destroyed.

> If they had done no other Mischief [said Franklin], I would have more easily excused them, as he has been an eminent Promoter of the American War, and it is not amiss that those who have approved the Burning our poor People's Houses and Towns should taste a little of the Effects of Fire themselves. But they turn'd all the Thieves and Robbers out of Newgate to the Number of three hundred, and instead of replacing them with an equal Number of other Plunderers of the Publick, which they might easily have found among the Members of Parliament, they burnt the Building.

The relations between Franklin and Ebenezer Kinnersley, who shared his enthusiasm for electrical experi-

ments, John Foxcroft, who became his colleague, as Deputy Postmaster-General for America after the death of Colonel Hunter, and the Rev. Thomas Coombe, the assistant minister of Christ Church and St. Peter's in Philadelphia, were of an affectionate nature, but there is little of salient interest to be said about these relations. Malice has asserted that Franklin did not give Kinnersley due credit for ideas that he borrowed from him in his electrical experiments. If so, Kinnersley must have had a relish for harsh treatment, for in a letter to Franklin, when speaking of the lightning rod, he exclaimed, "May it extend to the latest posterity of mankind, and make the name of FRANKLIN like that of NEWTON *immortal!*"

James Wright, and his sister, Susannah Wright, who resided at Hempfield, near Wright's Ferry, Pennsylvania, were likewise good friends of Franklin. Part at any rate of the flour, on which Braddock's army subsisted, was supplied by a mill erected by James Wright near the mouth of the Shawanese Run. Susannah Wright was a woman of parts, interested in silk culture, and fond of reading. On one occasion, Franklin sends her from Philadelphia a couple of pamphlets refuting the charges of plagiarism preferred by William Lauder against the memory of Milton and a book or tract entitled *Christianity not Founded on Argument.* On another occasion, in a letter from London to Deborah, he mentions, as part of the contents of a box that he was transmitting to America, some pamphlets for the Speaker and "Susy" Wright. Another gift to her was a specimen of a new kind of candles, "very convenient to read by." She would find, he said, that they afforded a clear white light, might be held in the hand even in hot weather without softening, did not make grease spots with their drops like those made by common candles, and lasted much longer, and needed little or no snuffing.

A sentiment of cordial friendship also existed between

Franklin and Anthony Benezet, a Philadelphia Quaker, born in France, who labored throughout his life with untiring zeal for the abolition of the Slave Trade. This trade, in the opinion of Franklin, not only disgraced the Colonies, but, without producing any equivalent benefit, was dangerous to their very existence. When actually engaged in business, as a printer, no less than two books, aimed at the abolition of Slavery, one by Ralph Sandyford, and the other by Benjamin Lay, both Quakers, were published by him. The fact that Sandyford's book was published before 1730 and Lay's as early as 1736, led Franklin to say in a letter to a friend in 1789, when the feeling against Slavery was much more widespread, that the headway, which it had obtained, was some confirmation of Lord Bacon's observation that a good motion never dies—the same reflection, by the way, with which he consoled himself when his abridgment of the Book of Common Prayer fell still-born.

When Franklin took a friend to his bosom, it was usually, as he took Deborah, for life. But Joseph Galloway, one of his Philadelphia friends, was an exception to this rule. When Galloway decided to cast his lot with the Loyalists, after Franklin, in a feeling letter to him, had painted their "rising country" in auroral colors, Franklin simply let him lapse into the general mass of detested Tories. Previously, his letters to Galloway, while attended with but few personal details, had been of a character to indicate that he not only entertained a very high estimate of Galloway's abilities but cherished for him the warmest feeling of affection. Indeed, in assuring Galloway of this affection, he sometimes used a term as strong as "unalterable." When Galloway at the age of forty thought of retiring from public life, Franklin told him that it would be in his opinion something criminal to bury in private retirement so early all the usefulness of so much experience and such great abilities.

Several years before he had written to Cadwallader Evans that he did not see that Galloway could be spared from the Assembly without great detriment to their affairs and to the general welfare of America. Among the most valuable of his letters, are his letters to Galloway on political conditions in England when the latter was the Speaker of the Pennsylvania Assembly. In one he expresses the hope that a few months would bring them together, and hazards the belief that, in the calm retirement of Trevose, Galloway's country place, they might perhaps spend some hours usefully in conversation over the proper constitution for the American Colonies. When Franklin learned from his son that hints had reached the latter that Galloway's friendship for Franklin had been chilled by the fear that he and Franklin would be rivals for the same office, Franklin replied by stating that, if this office would be agreeable to Galloway, he heartily wished it for him.

No insinuations of the kind you mention [he said], concerning Mr. G.,— have reached me, and, if they had, it would have been without the least effect; as I have always had the strongest reliance on the steadiness of his friendship, and on the best grounds, the knowledge I have of his integrity, and the often repeated disinterested services he has rendered me.

In another letter to his son, he said, "I cast my eye over Goddard's Piece against our friend Mr. Galloway, and then lit my Fire with it."

The shadow of the approaching cloud is first noticed in a letter to Galloway in 1775, in which Franklin asks him for permission to hint to him that it was whispered in London by ministerial people that he and Mr. Jay of New York were friends to their measures, and gave them private intelligence of the views of the Popular Party. While at Passy, Franklin informed the Congressional

Committee on Foreign Affairs that General and Lord Howe, Generals Cornwallis and Grey and other British officers had formally given it as their opinion in Parliament that the conquest of America was impracticable, and that Galloway and other American Loyalists were to be examined that week to prove the contrary. "One would think the first Set were likely to be the best Judges," he adds with acidulous brevity. Later on, he did not dispose of Galloway so concisely. In a letter to Richard Bache, after suggesting that some of his missing letter books might be recovered by inquiry in the vicinity of Galloway's country seat, he says, smarting partly under the loss of his letter books, and partly under the deception that Galloway had practised upon him:

I should not have left them in his Hands, if he had not deceiv'd me, by saying, that, though he was before otherwise inclin'd, yet that, since the King had declar'd us out of his Protection, and the Parliament by an Act had made our Properties Plunder, he would go as far in the Defence of his Country as any man; and accordingly he had lately with Pleasure given Colours to a Regiment of Militia, and an Entertainment to 400 of them before his House. I thought he was become a stanch Friend to the glorious Cause. I was mistaken. As he was a Friend of my Son's, to whom in my Will I had Left all my Books and Papers, I made him one of my Executors, and put the Trunk of Papers into his Hands, imagining them safer in his House (which was out of the way of any probable March of the enemies' Troops) than in my own.

The correspondence between Franklin and Galloway is enlivened by only a single gleam of Franklin's humor. This was kindled by the protracted uncertainty which attended the application of his associates and himself to the British Crown for the Ohio grant.

The Affair of the Grant [Franklin wrote to Galloway] goes on but slowly. I do not yet clearly see Land. I begin

to be a little of the Sailor's Mind when they were handing a Cable out of a Store into a Ship, and one of 'em said: "'Tis a long, heavy Cable. I wish we could see the End of it." "D–n me," says another, "if I believe it has any End; somebody has cut it off."[1]

James Logan, the accomplished Quaker scholar, David Hall, Franklin's business partner, and Charles Thomson, the Secretary of Congress, were other residents of Pennsylvania, with whom Franklin was connected by ties of friendship, and we shall have occasion to speak of them again when we come to his business and political career. "You will give an old man leave to say, My Love to Mrs. Thompson," was a closing sentence in one of his letters to Charles Thomson.

David Rittenhouse, of Philadelphia, the celebrated astronomer was also a dear friend of his.

Of his New York friends, John Jay was the one, of whom he was fondest, and this friendship included the whole of Jay's family. In a letter from Passy to Jay, shortly after Jay arrived at Madrid, as our minister plenipotentiary to Spain, he tells him that he sends for Mrs. Jay at her request a print of himself.

The Verses at the bottom [he wrote] are truly extravagant. But you must know, that the Desire of pleasing, by a perpetual rise of Compliments in this polite Nation, has so us'd up all the common Expressions of Approbation, that they are become flat and insipid, and to use them almost implies Censure. Hence Musick, that formerly might be sufficiently prais'd when it was called *bonne*, to go a little farther they call'd it *excellente*, *then superbe*, *magnifique*, *exquise*, céleste, all which being in their turns worn out, there only remains *divine;* and, when that is grown as insignificant as its Predecessors, I think they must return to common Speech and

[1] "The ship Ohio still aground," is the manner in which Franklin communicated on one occasion to Galloway the slow progress that the application for the Ohio grant was making.

common Sense; as from vying with one another in fine and costly Paintings on their Coaches, since I first knew the Country, not being able to go farther in that Way, they have returned lately to plain Carriages, painted without Arms or Figures, in one uniform Colour.

In a subsequent letter, Franklin informs Jay that, through the assistance of the French Court, he is in a position to honor the drafts of Jay to the extent of $25,000. "If you find any Inclination to hug me for the good News of this Letter," he concluded, "I constitute and appoint Mrs. Jay my Attorney, to receive in my Behalf your embraces."

Afterwards Jay was appointed one of our Commissioners to negotiate the treaty of peace with Great Britain, and he and his family settled down under the same roof with Franklin at Passy. The result was a mutual feeling of attachment, so strong that when Jay returned to America Franklin could write to him of a kind letter that he had received from him: "It gave me Pleasure on two Accounts; as it inform'd me of the public Welfare, and that of your, I may almost say *our* dear little Family; for, since I had the Pleasure of their being with me in the same House, I have ever felt a tender Affection for them, equal I believe to that of most Fathers." In other letters to Jay, there are repeated references by Franklin to a child of Jay whose singular attachment to him, he said, he would always remember. "Embrace my little Friend for me," he wrote to Jay and his wife, when he was wishing them a prosperous return voyage to America, and, in a later letter, after his own return to America, to the same pair, he said he was so well as to think it possible that he might once more have the pleasure of seeing them both at New York, with his dear young friend, who, he hoped, might not have quite forgotten him.

Beyond the Harlem River, his friends were only less

numerous than they were in Pennsylvania. Among the most conspicuous were Josiah Quincy, John Winthrop, Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy at Harvard College, and Dr. Samuel Cooper, the celebrated clergyman and patriot. We mention these three Boston friends of his first because they were feelingly grouped in a letter that he wrote to James Bowdoin, another valued Boston friend of his, towards the close of his life. In this letter, he tells Bowdoin that it had given him great pleasure to receive his kind letter, as it proved that all his friends in Boston were not estranged from him by the malevolent misrepresentations of his conduct that had been circulated there, but that one of the most esteemed still retained a regard for him. "Indeed," Franklin said, "you are now almost the only one left me by nature; Death having, since we were last together, depriv'd me of my dear Cooper, Winthrop, and Quincy." Winthrop, he had said, in an earlier letter to Dr. Cooper, was one of the old friends for the sake of whose society he wished to return from France and spend the small remnant of his days in New England. The friendship between Quincy and Franklin began when Franklin was a member of the Pennsylvania Assembly, and had its origin in the sum of ten thousand pounds, which Quincy, as the agent of the Colony of Massachusetts, obtained through the assistance of Franklin from the Colony of Pennsylvania for the military needs of the former colony. Quincy, Franklin said in the *Autobiography*, returned thanks to the Assembly in a handsome memorial, went home highly pleased with the success of his embassy, and ever after bore for him the most cordial and affectionate friendship.

For Quincy's highly promising son, Josiah, who died at sea at the early age of thirty-five, Franklin formed a warm regard when Josiah came over to London during the second mission of Franklin to England. To the father he wrote of the son in terms that were doubtless deeply

gratifying to him, and, in a letter to James Bowdoin, he said: "I am much pleased with Mr. Quincy. It is a thousand pities his strength of body is not equal to his strength of mind. His zeal for the public, like that of David for God's house, will, I fear, eat him up." Later, when the younger Quincy's zeal had actually consumed him, Franklin wrote to the elder Quincy:

> The epitaph on my dear and much esteemed young Friend, is too well written to be capable of Improvement by any Corrections of mine. Your Moderation appears in it, since the natural affection of a Parent has not induced you to exaggerate his Virtues. I shall always mourn his Loss with you; a Loss not easily made up to his Country.

And then, referring to some of the falsehoods in circulation about his own conduct as Commissioner, he exclaimed: "How differently constituted was his noble and generous Mind from that of the miserable Calumniators you mention! Having Plenty of Merit in himself, he was not jealous of the Appearance of Merit in others, but did Justice to their Characters with as much Pleasure as these People do Injury."

When he sat down at Saratoga to write to a few friends by way of farewell, fearing that the mission to Canada at his time of life would prove too much for him, Quincy was the first of his New England friends to whom he sent an adieu.

To Dr. Samuel Cooper, Franklin wrote some of the most valuable of all his political letters, but the correspondence between them is marked by few details of a personal or social nature. It was upon the recommendation of Franklin that the degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred upon Cooper by the University of Edinburgh. "The Part I took in the Application for your Degree," he wrote to Dr. Cooper, "was merely doing justice to Merit, which is the Duty of an honest Man

whenever he has the Opportunity." That Dr. Cooper was duly grateful, we may infer, among other things, from a letter in which Franklin tells his sister Jane that he is obliged to good Dr. Cooper for his prayers. That he was able to hold his own even with such a skilful dispenser of compliments as Franklin himself we may readily believe after reading the letter to Franklin in which he used these words: "You once told me in a letter, as you were going to France, the public had had the eating your flesh and seemed resolved to pick your bones—we all agree the nearer the bone the sweeter the meat." It was to Dr. Cooper that Franklin expressed the hope that America would never deserve the reproof administered to an enthusiastical knave in Pennsylvania, who, when asked by his creditor to give him a bond and pay him interest, replied:

> No, I cannot do that; I cannot in conscience either receive or pay Interest, it is against my Principle. You have then the Conscience of a Rogue, says the Creditor: You tell me it is against your Principle to pay Interest; and it being against your Interest to pay the Principal, I perceive you do not intend to pay me either one or t'other.

The letters of Franklin to James Bowdoin are full of interest, but the interest is scientific.

Another Boston friend of Franklin was Mather Byles. In a letter to him, Franklin expresses his pleasure at learning that the lives of Byles and his daughters had been protected by his "points," and his regret that electricity had not really proved what it was at first supposed to be—a cure for the palsy.

> It is however happy for you [Franklin said], that, when Old Age and that Malady have concurr'd to infeeble you, and to disable you for Writing, you have a Daughter at hand to nurse you with filial Attention, and to be your Secre-

tary, of which I see she is very capable, by the Elegance and Correctness of her Writing in the Letter I am now answering.

Other letters from Franklin to Byles have unhappily perished. This fact is brought to our knowledge by a letter from him to Elizabeth Partridge, which shows that even the famous letter to her, in which he spoke of the end of his brother as if he had gone off quietly from a party of pleasure in a sedan chair, led for a time a precarious existence. If this was the letter, he said, of which she desired a copy, he fancied that she might possibly find it in Boston, as Dr. Byles once wrote to him that many copies had been taken of it. Then follows this playful and characteristic touch. "I too, should have been glad to have seen that again, among others I had written to him and you. But you inform me they were eaten by the Mice. Poor little innocent Creatures, I am sorry they had no better Food. But since they like my Letters, here is another Treat for them."

Another Massachusetts friend of Franklin was Samuel Danforth, the President of its Colonial Council. "It gave me great pleasure," Franklin wrote to this friend on one occasion, "to receive so chearful an Epistle from a Friend of half a Century's Standing, and to see him commencing Life anew in so valuable a Son." When this letter was written, Franklin was in his sixty-eighth year, but how far he was from being sated with the joy of living other passages in it clearly manifest.

I hope [he said] for the great Pleasure of once more seeing and conversing with you: And tho' living-on in one's Children, as we both may do, is a good thing, I cannot but fancy it might be better to continue living ourselves at the same time. I rejoice, therefore, in your kind Intentions of including me in the Benefits of that inestimable Stone, which, curing all Diseases (even old Age itself) will enable us to see the future glorious state of our America, enjoying in full security her own

Liberties, and offering in her Bosom a Participation of them to all the oppress'd of other Nations. I anticipate the jolly Conversation we and twenty more of our Friends may have 100 Years hence on this subject, over that well replenish'd Bowl at Cambridge Commencement.

In Connecticut, too, Franklin had some highly prized friends. Among them were Jared Eliot, the grandson of Apostle Eliot, and the author of an essay upon *Field Husbandry in New England*, Ezra Stiles, President of Yale College, Dr. Samuel Johnson and Jared Ingersoll. The letters from Franklin to Eliot are a charming *mélange* of what is now known as Popular Science and Agriculture. To Franklin there was philosophy even in the roasting of an egg, and for agriculture he had the partiality which no one, so close to all the pulsations of nature as he was, can fail to entertain. When he heard from his friend Mrs. Catherine Greene that her son Ray was "smart in the farming way," he wrote to her, "I think agriculture the most honourable of all employments, being the most independent. The farmer has no need of popular favour, nor the favour of the great; the success of his crops depending only on the blessing of God upon his honest industry." Franklin, of course, was writing before the day of the trust, the high protective tariff, the San José scale and the boll weevil.

In one letter to Eliot he gossips delightfully upon such diverse topics as the price of linseed oil, the kind of land on which Pennsylvania hemp was raised, the recent weather, northeast storms, the origin of springs, sea-shell strata and import duties. Something is also said in the letter about grass seed, and it is curious to note that apparently Franklin was not aware that in parts of New England timothy has always been known as herd's-grass. And this reminds us that he repeatedly in his later life protested against the use in New England of the word "improve"

in the sense of "employ" as a barbarous innovation, when in point of fact the word had been used in that sense in a lampoon in the *Courant*, when that lively sheet was being published under his youthful management. In another letter, written probably in the year 1749, Franklin tells Eliot that he had purchased some eighteen months before about three hundred acres of land near Burlington, and was resolved to improve it in the best and speediest manner. "My fortune, (thank God)," he said, "is such that I can enjoy all the necessaries and many of the Indulgencies of Life; but I think that in Duty to my children I ought so to manage, that the profits of my Farm may Balance the loss my Income will Suffer by my retreat to it." He then proceeds to narrate to Eliot what he had done to secure this result; how he had scoured up the ditches and drains in one meadow, reduced it to an arable condition, and reaped a good crop of oat fodder from it, and how he had then immediately ploughed the meadow again and harrowed it, and sowed it with different kinds of grass seed. "Take the whole together," he said with decided satisfaction, "it is well-matted, and looks like a green corn-field." He next tells how he drained a round pond of twelve acres, and seeded the soil previously covered by it, too. Even in such modest operations as these the quick observation and precise standards of a man, who was perhaps first of all a man of science, are apparent. He noted that the red clover came up in four days and the herd's-grass in six days, that the herd's-grass was less sensitive to frost than the red clover, and that the thicker grass seed is sown the less injured by the frost the young grass is apt to be. By actual experiment, he found that a bushel of clean chaff of timothy or salem grass seed would yield five quarts of seed. In another letter to Eliot he has a word to say about the Schuyler copper mine in New Jersey (the only valuable copper mine in America that he knew of) which yielded good copper and

turned out vast wealth to its owners. And then there is a ray from the splendor in which the lordly Schuylers lived in this bit of descriptive detail:

> Col. John Schuyler, one of the owners, has a deer park five miles round, fenced with cedar logs, five logs high, with blocks of wood between. It contains a variety of land, high and low, woodland and clear. There are a great many deer in it; and he expects in a few years to be able to kill two hundred head a year, which will be a very profitable thing. He has likewise six hundred acres of meadow, all within bank.

The fact that Col. John Schuyler had six hundred acres of meadow land within bank was not lost on Eliot; for later Franklin writes to him again promising to obtain from Colonel Schuyler a particular account of the method pursued by him in improving this land. "In return," said Franklin, "(for you know there is no Trade without Returns) I request you to procure for me a particular Acct of the manner of making a new kind of Fence we saw at Southhold, on Long Island, which consists of a Bank and Hedge." With the exactitude of an experimental philosopher, he then details the precise particulars that he desired, disclosing in doing so the fact that Pennsylvania was beginning in many places to be at a loss for wood to fence with. This statement need not surprise the reader, for in his *Account of the New-Invented Pennsylvanian Fire-places*, published some six years before, Franklin informs us that wood, at that time the common fuel, which could be formerly obtained at every man's door, had then to be fetched near one hundred miles to some towns, and made a very considerable article in the expense of families. From this same essay, we learn that it was deemed uncertain by Franklin whether "Pit-Coal" would ever be discovered in Pennsylvania! In another letter from Franklin to Eliot, along with some items about Peter Collinson, "a

most benevolent, worthy man, very curious in botany and other branches of natural history, and fond of improvements in agriculture, &c.," Hugh Roberts' high opinion of Eliot's "Pieces," ditching, the Academy, barometers, thermometers and hygrometers, Franklin has some sprightly observations to make upon the love of praise. Rarely, we venture to say, have more winning arguments ever been urged for the reversal of the world's judgment upon any point.

What you mention concerning the love of praise is indeed very true; it reigns more or less in every heart; though we are generally hypocrites, in that respect, and pretend to disregard praise, and our nice, modest ears are offended, forsooth, with what one of the ancients calls *the sweetest kind of music*. This hypocrisy is only a sacrifice to the pride of others, or to their envy; both which, I think, ought rather to be mortified. The same sacrifice we make, when we forbear to *praise ourselves*, which naturally we are all inclined to; and I suppose it was formerly the fashion, or Virgil, that courtly writer, would not have put a speech into the mouth of his hero, which now-a-days we should esteem so great an indecency;

> "Sum pius Æneas . . .
> . . . famâ super æthera notus."

One of the Romans, I forget who, justified speaking in his own praise by saying, *Every freeman had a right to speak what he thought of himself as well as of others*. That this is a natural inclination appears in that all children show it, and say freely, *I am a good boy; Am I not a good girl?* and the like, till they have been frequently chid, and told their trumpeter is dead; and that it is unbecoming to sound their own praise, &c. But *naturam expellas furcâ, tamen usque recurret*. Being forbid to praise themselves, they learn instead of it to censure others; which is only a roundabout way of praising themselves; for condemning the conduct of another, in any particular, amounts to as much as saying, *I am so honest, or wise, or good, or pru-*

dent, that I could not do or approve of such an action. This fondness for ourselves, rather than malevolence to others, I take to be the general source of censure and back biting; and I wish men had not been taught to dam up natural currents, to the overflowing and damage of their neighbour's grounds.

Another advantage, methinks, would arise from freely speaking our good thoughts of ourselves, viz. if we were wrong in them, somebody or other would readily set us right; but now, while we conceal so carefully our vain, erroneous self-opinions, we may carry them to our grave, for who would offer physic to a man that seems to be in health? And the privilege of recounting freely our own good actions might be an inducement to the doing of them, that we might be enabled to speak of them without being subject to be justly contradicted or charged with falsehood; whereas now, as we are not allowed to mention them, and it is an uncertainty whether others will take due notice of them or not, we are perhaps the more indifferent about them; so that, upon the whole, I wish the out-of-fashion practice of praising ourselves would, like other old fashions, come round into fashion again. But this I fear will not be in our time, so we must even be contented with what little praise we can get from one another. And I will endeavour to make you some amends for the trouble of reading this long scrawl, by telling you, that I have the sincerest esteem for you, as an ingenious man and a good one, which together make the valuable member of society.

It is letters like this that cause us to feel that, if it were known that the lost letters of Franklin were somewhere still in existence, the world might well organize another company of Argonauts to find them.

In a subsequent letter to Eliot, Franklin thanks him for his gift of Merino wool, and tells him that it was one Mr. Masters who made dung of leaves, and not Mr. Roberts. In the same letter, he takes occasion to let

Eliot know that Peter Collinson has written to him that the worthy, learned and ingenious Mr. Jackson, who had been prevailed on to give some dissertations on the husbandry of Norfolk for the benefit of the Colonies, admired Eliot's agricultural tracts. In still another letter to Eliot, Franklin, true to the brief that he held for love of praise, writes to him in these terms of unreserved gratification:

The *Tatler* tells us of a Girl, who was observed to grow suddenly proud, and none cou'd guess the Reason, till it came to be known that she had got on a new Pair of Garters. Lest you should be puzzled to guess the Cause, when you observe any Thing of the kind in me, I think I will not hide my new Garters under my Petticoats, but take the Freedom to show them to you, in a paragraph of our friend Collinson's Letter, viz.—But I ought to mortify, and not indulge, this Vanity; I will not transcribe the Paragraph, yet I cannot forbear.

He then transcribes the paragraph in which Collinson had informed him that the Grand Monarch of France had commanded the Abbé Mazeas to write a letter in the politest terms to the Royal Society, to return the King's thanks and compliments in an express manner to Mr. Franklin of Pennsylvania for his useful discoveries in electricity, and the application of pointed rods to prevent the terrible effect of thunderstorms. "I think, now I have stuck a Feather in thy Cap," ended Collinson, "I may be allowed to conclude in wishing thee long to wear it."

On reconsidering this Paragraph [continued Franklin], I fear I have not so much Reason to be proud as the Girl had; for a Feather in the Cap is not so useful a Thing, or so serviceable to the Wearer, as a Pair of good silk Garters. The Pride of Man is very differently gratify'd; and, had his Majesty sent me a marshal's staff, I think I should scarce have been so proud of it, as I am of your Esteem.

There were many principles of congeniality at work to cause Franklin to open his heart so familiarly to Eliot, but one of the most active doubtless was their common love of good stories. "I remember with Pleasure the cheerful Hours I enjoy'd last Winter in your Company," he wrote to Eliot, after his visit to New England in 1754, "and would with all my heart give any ten of the thick old Folios that stand on the Shelves before me, for a *little book* of the Stories you then told with so much Propriety and Humor."

We have already referred to the famous letter, in which, Franklin, a few weeks before his death, stated his religious creed with such unfaltering clearness and directness to Dr. Ezra Stiles, who had written to him, saying that he wished to know the opinion of his venerable friend concerning Jesus of Nazareth, and expressing the hope that he would not impute this to impertinence or improper curiosity in one, who, for so many years, had continued to love, estimate and reverence his abilities and literary character with an ardor and affection bordering on adoration. In his reply, Franklin declared that he had never before been questioned upon religion, and he asked Dr. Stiles not to publish what he had written.

> I have ever [he said] let others enjoy their religious Sentiments, without reflecting on them for those that appeared to me unsupportable and even absurd. All Sects here, and we have a great Variety, have experienced my good will in assisting them with Subscriptions for building their new Places of Worship; and, as I have never opposed any of their Doctrines, I hope to go out of the World in Peace with them all.

This letter is so full of interest for the reader that it is to be regretted that Dr. Stiles did not oftener indulge the national weakness for asking questions before his aged correspondent went out of the world in peace with the

sects, which most assuredly would have followed him with a shower of stones as thick as that which overwhelmed St. Stephen, if they had known that the discreet old philosopher, who contrived to keep on such comfortable working terms with every one of them, doubted all the while the divinity of our Lord. This letter also has a readable word to say in response to the honor that Dr. Stiles proposed to do Franklin by placing his portrait in the same room at Yale with that of Governor Yale, whom Franklin pronounced "a great and good man." Yale College, Franklin gratefully recalled, was the first learned society that took notice of him, and adorned him with its honors, though it was from the University of St. Andrews that he received the title which made him known to the world as "Dr. Franklin."

Dr. Samuel Johnson has been termed "the venerable father of the Episcopal Church of Connecticut and the apostle of sound learning and elegant literature in New England," and it is not surprising that Franklin should have strained his dialectical skill almost to the point of casuistry in an effort to meet the various reasons which the Doctor gave him for his hesitation about accepting the headship of the Academy, such as his years, his fear of the small-pox, the politeness of Philadelphia and his imagined rusticity, his diffidence of his powers and his reluctance about drawing off parishioners from Dr. Jenney, the rector of Christ Church and St. Peters. As we have seen, even the multiplying effect of setting up more than one pigeon box against a house was ineffective to lure the apprehensive churchman to Philadelphia. In one of his letters to Dr. Johnson, the enthusiasm of Franklin over the Academy project endows his words with real nobility of utterance.

I think with you [he said], that nothing is of more importance for the public weal, than to form and train up youth in

wisdom and virtue. Wise and good men are, in my opinion, the *strength* of a state far more so than riches or arms, which, under the management of Ignorance and Wickedness, often draw on destruction, instead of providing for the safety of a people. And though the culture bestowed on *many* should be successful only with a *few*, yet the influence of those few and the service in their power may be very great. Even a single woman, that was wise, by her wisdom saved a city.

I think also, that general virtue is more probably to be expected and obtained from the *education* of youth, than from the *exhortation* of adult persons; bad habits and vices of the mind being, like diseases of the body, more easily prevented than cured. I think, moreover, that talents for the education of youth are the gift of God; and that he on whom they are bestowed, whenever a way is opened for the use of them, is as strongly *called* as if he heard a voice from heaven.

Remarkable words these to fall from a man who, some two months later, in another letter to Dr. Johnson, modestly declared himself to be unfit to sketch out the idea of the English School for the Academy, having neither been educated himself (except as a tradesman) nor ever been concerned in educating others, he said.

Nobody would imagine [said Dr. Johnson, after reading the sketch,] that the draught you have made for an English education was done by a Tradesman. But so it sometimes is, a true genius will not content itself without entering more or less into almost everything, and of mastering many things more in spite of fate itself.

The friendship between Franklin and Jared Ingersoll is preserved in a single letter only, the one from which we have already quoted in which Franklin had his good-natured jest at the expense of the doleful New England Sunday.

All of these friends were men, but in Catherine Ray, afterwards the wife of Governor William Greene of Rhode

Island, and the mother of Ray Greene, one of the early United States Senators from that State, Franklin had a friend whose sex gave a different turn of sentiment and expression to his pen. His first letter to this young woman ("Dear Katy" is the way he addresses her) was written after his return to Philadelphia from a journey to New England in 1754. She then lived on Block Island, and, when he last saw her, she was fading out of sight on the ocean on her way to that island from the mainland.

I thought too much was hazarded [he wrote], when I saw you put off to sea in that very little skiff, tossed by every wave. But the call was strong and just, a sick parent. I stood on the shore, and looked after you, till I could no longer distinguish you, even with my glass; then returned to your sister's, praying for your safe passage.

These words are followed by the paragraph already quoted, in which Franklin acknowledged the affectionate hospitality of New England and the paragraph, already quoted, too, in which he spoke of his being restored to the arms of his good old wife and children.

Persons subject to the *hyp* [he continued] complain of the northeast wind, as increasing their malady. But since you promised to send me kisses in that wind, and I find you as good as your word, it is to me the gayest wind that blows, and gives me the best spirits. I write this during a northeast storm of snow, the greatest we have had this winter. Your favours come mixed with the snowy fleeces, which are as pure as your virgin innocence, white as your lovely bosom, and —as cold. But let it warm towards some worthy young man, and may Heaven bless you both with every kind of happiness.

The letter concludes with these words:

I desired Miss Anna Ward to send you over a little book I left with her, for your amusement in that lonely island. My respects to your good father, and mother, and sister. Let

me often hear of your welfare, since it is not likely I shall ever again have the pleasure of seeing you. Accept mine, and my wife's sincere thanks for the many civilities I receiv'd from you and your relations; and do me the justice to believe me, dear girl, your affectionate, faithful, friend, and humble servant.

This letter was dated March 4, 1755, and was in reply to one from Miss Ray which, though dated as far back as January of the same year, had just reached him.

His next letter was dated September 11, 1755, not long after he rendered his unavailing services to Braddock, and was a reply to three other letters of hers of March 3, March 30 and May 1 of that year. It begins: "Begone, business, for an hour, at least, and let me chat a little with my Katy," and apologizes for his belated reply.

Equal returns [he declares], I can never make, tho' I should write to you by every post; for the pleasure I receive from one of yours is more than you can have from two of mine. The small news, the domestic occurrences among our friends, the natural pictures you draw of persons, the sensible observations and reflections you make, and the easy, chatty manner in which you express everything, all contribute to heighten the pleasure; and the more as they remind me of those hours and miles, that we talked away so agreeably, even in a winter journey, a wrong road, and a soaking shower.

In answer to Miss Ray's inquiry about his health, he tells her that he still relishes all the pleasures of life that a temperate man can in reason desire, and, through favor, has them all in his power. In answer to her question as to whether everybody loved him yet, and why he made them do so, he replied:

I must confess (but don't you be jealous), that many more people love me now, than ever did before; for since I saw you I have been enabled to do some general services to the coun-

try, and to the army, for which both have thanked and praised me, and say they love me. They say so, as you used to do; and if I were to ask any favours of them, they would, perhaps, as readily refuse me; so that I find little real advantage in being beloved, but it pleases my humor. . . . I long to hear, [he says in another part of the same letter] whether you have continued ever since in that monastery (Block Island); or have broke into the world again, doing pretty mischief; how the lady Wards do, and how many of them are married, or about it; what is become of Mr. B— and Mr. L—, and what the state of your heart is at this instant? But that, perhaps, I ought not to know; and, therefore, I will not conjure, as you sometimes say I do. If I could conjure, it should be to know what was that *oddest question about me that ever was thought* of, which you tell me a lady had just sent to ask you.

I commend your prudent resolutions, in the article of granting favours to lovers. But, if I were courting you, I could not hardly approve such conduct. I should even be malicious enough to say you were too *knowing*, and tell you the old story of the Girl and the Miller. I enclose you the songs you write for, and with them your Spanish letter with a translation. I honour that honest Spaniard for loving you. It showed the goodness of his taste and judgment. But you must forget him, and bless some worthy young Englishman.

Then comes the reference to his Joan (Deborah) which we have quoted in another place. She sends her respectful compliments to Miss Ray, he states; and lastly in a postscript he gives Miss Ray this caution: "As to your spelling, don't let those laughing girls put you out of conceit with it. It is the best in the world, for every letter of it stands for something."

The sincerity of this conviction he proved at least once on another occasion by himself spelling his Katy's first name with a C instead of a K.

It is to be feared that Miss Ray was a lively flirt, and it is hard to read Franklin's frequent allusions to Deborah in his letters to her without suspecting that he found it

necessary at times to use his wife just a little as a shield.

The next letter from Franklin to Miss Ray is marked by the understrain of coarse license, which ran through his character, and was partly the note of his age, and partly the note of overflowing vital force.

I hear you are now in Boston [he said], gay and lovely as usual. Let me give you some fatherly Advice. Kill no more Pigeons than you can eat—Be a good Girl and don't forget your Catechism.—Go constantly to Meeting—or church—till you get a good Husband,—then stay at home, & nurse the Children, and live like a Christian—Spend your spare Hours, in sober Whisk, Prayers, or learning to cypher—You must practise *addition* to your Husband's Estate, by Industry & Frugality; *subtraction* of all unnecessary Expenses; *Multiplication* (I would gladly have taught you that myself, but you thought it was time enough, & wou'dn't learn) he will soon make you a Mistress of it. As to *Division*, I say with Brother Paul, *Let there be no Division among ye.* But as your good Sister Hubbard (my love to her) is well acquainted with *The Rule of Two*, I hope you will become an expert in the *Rule of Three;* that when I have again the pleasure of seeing you, I may find you like my Grape Vine, surrounded with Clusters, plump, juicy, blushing, pretty little rogues, like their Mama. Adieu. The Bell rings, and I must go among the Grave ones, and talk Politics.

Passages like these are among the things which really tarnish the reputation of Franklin, and make us feel at times that, essentially admirable as he was, in some respects he was compounded of pipe, and not of porcelain, clay. The postscript to this letter, too, is flavored with the rude gallantry of the husking-bee. "The Plums," it said, "came safe, and were so sweet from the Cause you mentioned, that I could scarce taste the Sugar." But when Deputy-Postmaster Franklin next writes to Miss Ray it is with the light, playful grace of his best hours.

Your Apology [he said] for being in Boston, "*that you must visit that Sister once a year*" makes me suspect you are here for some other Reason; for why should you think your being there would need an Excuse to me when you knew that I knew how dearly you lov'd that Sister? Don't offer to hide your Heart from me. You know I can conjure.—Give my best respects, to y^r^ Sister, & tell her and all your other Sisters and Brothers, that they must behave very kindly to you, & love you dearly; or else I'll send a young Gentleman to steal & run away with you, who shall bring you to a Country from whence they shall never hear a word of you, without paying Postage. Mrs. Franklin joins in Love to you & sincere wishes for your welfare, with dear good Girl, your affectionate Friend.

Some six months later, when Franklin is on the eve of leaving America on his first mission to England, he writes briefly to Miss Ray again, and tells her he cannot go without taking leave of his dear friend, and is ashamed of having allowed her last letter to remain unanswered so long.

Present my best compliments [he adds] to your good mamma, brother and sister Ward, and all your other sisters, the agreeable Misses Ward, Dr. Babcock and family, the charitable Misses Stanton, and, in short, to all that love me. I should have said all that love you, but that would be giving you too much trouble. Adieu, dear good girl, and believe me ever your affectionate friend.

On the return of Franklin from England, he resumed his correspondence with Miss Ray; but Miss Ray she was no longer, for the divination of the conjurer had not failed him, and she was then married to William Greene. In a letter to Mrs. Greene, dated January 23, 1763, this fact leads to another smutty joke on Franklin's part over the arithmetic of matrimony, the worse for being jestingly ascribed to Mrs. Franklin, who, he said, accepted Mrs. Greene's apology for dropping the correspondence with

her, but hoped that it would be renewed when Mrs. Greene had more leisure. That the joke should be debited to the manners of the day fully as much as to Franklin himself, is made clear enough by the fact that it is immediately followed by the assurance that he would not fail to pay his respects to Mr., as well as Mrs., Greene when he came their way. "Please to make my Compliments acceptable to him," he added. The conclusion of this letter is in the former affectionate vein. "I think I am not much alter'd; at least my Esteem & Regard for my Katy (if I may still be permitted to call her so) is the same, and I believe will be unalterable whilst I am B. Franklin."

That they did prove unalterable it is hardly necessary to say. Some twenty-six years after the date of this letter, Franklin writes to Mrs. Greene: "Among the felicities of my life I reckon your friendship, which I shall remember with pleasure as long as that life lasts." And, in the meantime, he had given Mrs. Greene the proof of affectionate interest which, of all others, perhaps, is most endearing in a friend; that is he had taken her children as well as herself to his heart. After a brief visit with Sally to the Greenes in 1763, he wrote to Mrs. Greene, "My Compliments too to Mr. Merchant and Miss Ward if they are still with you; and kiss the Babies for me. Sally says, & *for me too*." This letter ends, "With perfect Esteem & Regard, I am, Dear Katy (I can't yet alter my Stile to Madam) your affectionate friend." In another letter to Mrs. Greene, about a month later, he says, "My best respects to good Mr. Greene, Mrs. Ray, and love to your little ones. I am glad to hear they are well, and that your Celia goes alone." The last two letters mentioned by us were written from Boston. Franklin's next letter to Mrs. Greene was written from Philadelphia, condoles with her on the death of her mother, tells her that his dame sends her love to her with her

thanks for the care that she had taken of her old man, and conveys his love to "the little dear creatures." "We are all glad to hear of Ray, for we all love him," he wrote to Mrs. Greene from Paris.

In the same letter, he said, "I live here in great Respect, and dine every day with great folks; but I still long for home & for Repose; and should be happy to eat Indian Pudding in your Company & under your hospitable Roof."

Hardly had he arrived in America on his return from France before he sent this affectionate message to Mrs. Greene and her husband: "I seize this first Opportunity of acquainting my dear Friends, that I have once more the great Happiness of being at home in my own Country, and with my Family, because I know it will give you Pleasure." As for Mrs. Greene, Jane Mecom informed him that, when she heard of his arrival, she was so overjoyed that her children thought she was afflicted with hysteria.

The friendship which existed between Franklin and the Greenes also existed between them and his sister Jane, who was a welcome guest under their roof. "I pity my poor old Sister, to be so harassed & driven about by the enemy," he wrote to Mrs. Greene from Paris in 1778, "For I feel a little myself the Inconvenience of being driven about by my friends."

CHAPTER VI

Franklin's British Friends

IN Great Britain, Franklin had almost as many friends as in America. During his missions to England, he resided at No. 7 Craven Street, London, the home of Mrs. Margaret Stevenson, a widow, and the mother of "Polly," whose filial relations to him constituted an idyll in his life. Into all the interests and feelings of this home, he entered almost as fully and sympathetically as he did into those of his own home in Philadelphia; as is charmingly attested by his Craven Street *Gazette*. Mrs. Stevenson looked after his clothing, attended to him when he was sick, and made the purchases from time to time that the commissions of Deborah and Jane Mecom called for. In one of his letters to Temple, written after his return from his second mission to England, Franklin mentions a long letter that he had received from her in the form of "a kind of Journal for a Month after our Departure, written on different Days, & of different Dates, acquainting me who has call'd, and what is done, with all the small News. In four or five Places, she sends her Love to her dear Boy, hopes he was not very sick at Sea, &c., &c." This journal doubtless set forth in a matter-of-fact way the daily life of the Craven Street household, which Franklin idealized with such captivating vivacity in the humorous pages of the Craven Street *Gazette*. At the Craven Street house, he and his son lived in great comfort, occupying four rooms, and waited

upon by his man-servant, and Billy's negro attendant; and, when he moved about the streets of London, it was in a modest chariot of his own. Franklin's letters to Deborah frequently conveyed affectionate messages from Mrs. Stevenson and Polly to Deborah and her daughter Sally. Occasionally, too, presents of one kind or another from Mrs. Stevenson found their way across the Atlantic to Deborah and Sally. Altogether, the Craven Street house, if not a true home to Franklin in every sense of the word, was a cheerful semblance of one. A letter from Dr. Priestley to him, which he received shortly after his return from Canada, during the American Revolution, bears witness to the impression left by his amiable traits upon the memory of the good woman with whom he had resided so long. After telling Franklin that Franklin's old servant Fevre often mentioned him with affection and respect, Dr. Priestley added, "Mrs. Stevenson is much as usual. She can talk about nothing but you." The feeling was fully returned.

It is always with great Pleasure [he wrote to her from Passy], when I think of our long continu'd Friendship, which had not the least Interruption in the Course of Twenty Years (some of the happiest of my Life), that I spent under your Roof and in your Company. If I do not write to you as often as I us'd to do, when I happen'd to be absent from you, it is owing partly to the present Difficulty of sure Communication, and partly to an Apprehension of some possible Inconvenience, that my Correspondence might occasion you. Be assured, my dear Friend, that my Regard, Esteem, and Affection for you, are not in the least impair'd or diminish'd; and that, if Circumstances would permit, nothing would afford me so much Satisfaction, as to be with you in the same House, and to experience again your faithful, tender Care, and Attention to my Interests, Health, and Comfortable Living, which so long and steadily attach'd me to you, and which I shall ever remember with Gratitude.

And, when the news of Mrs. Stevenson's death was communicated to Franklin by her daughter, the retrospect of the last twenty-five years that it opened up to him framed itself into these tender words in his reply.

During the greatest Part of the Time, I lived in the same House with my dear deceased Friend, your Mother; of course you and I saw and convers'd with each other much and often. It is to all our Honours, that in all that time we never had among us the smallest Misunderstanding. Our Friendship has been all clear Sunshine, without the least Cloud in its Hemisphere. Let me conclude by saying to you, what I have had too frequent Occasions to say to my other remaining old Friends, "The fewer we become, the more let us love one another."

On the back of the last letter, dated July 24, 1782, that he received from Mrs. Stevenson, he indorsed this memorandum: "This good woman, my dear Friend, died the first of January following. She was about my Age."

But the closest friendship that Franklin formed in England was with Mary, or Polly, Stevenson. To her, perhaps, the most delightful of all his familiar letters were written—letters so full of love and watchful interest as to suggest a father rather than a friend. It is not too much to say that they are distinguished by a purity and tenderness of feeling almost perfect, and by a combination of delicate humor and instructive wisdom to which it would be hard to find a parallel. The first of them bears date May 4, 1759, and the last bears date May 30, 1786. That the letters, some forty-six in number, are not more numerous even than they are is due to the fact that, during the period of their intercourse, the two friends were often under the same roof, or, when they were not, saw each other frequently.

In his first letter, addressed to "My Dear Child," Franklin tells Polly, who was then about twenty years

of age, that he had hoped for the pleasure of seeing her the day before at the Oratorio in the Foundling Hospital, but that, though he looked with all the eyes he had, not excepting even those he carried in his pocket, he could not find her. He had, however, he said, fixed that day se'nnight for a little journey into Essex, and would take Mrs. Stevenson with him as far as the home of Mrs. Tickell, Polly's aunt, at Wanstead, where Polly then was, and would call for Mrs. Stevenson there on his return. "Will," he says in a postscript, "did not see you in the Park." Will, of course, was his son. In the succeeding year, he writes to Polly that he embraces most gladly his dear friend's proposal of a subject for their future correspondence, though he fears that his necessary business and journeys, with the natural indolence of an old man, will make him too unpunctual a correspondent.

> But why will you [he asks], by the Cultivation of your Mind, make yourself still more amiable, and a more desirable Companion for a Man of Understanding, when you are determin'd, as I hear, to live single? If we enter, as you propose, into *moral* as well as natural Philosophy, I fancy, when I have fully establish'd my Authority as a Tutor, I shall take upon me to lecture you a little on that Chapter of Duty.

He then maps out a course of reading for her, to be conducted in such a manner as to furnish them with material for their letters. "Believe me ever, my dear good Girl," he concludes, "your affectionate Friend and Servant."

With his next letter, he sends her a gift of books, and begs her to accept it, as a small mark of his esteem and friendship, and the gift is accompanied with more specific advice as to the manner in which she was to prosecute her studies, and obtain the benefit of his knowledge and counsel. When he writes again, his letter discloses the fact that a brisk interchange of ideas had been actually

established between them. "Tis a very sensible Question you ask," he says, "how the Air can affect the Barometer, when its Opening appears covered with Wood?" And her observation on what she had lately read concerning insects is very just and solid too, he remarks. The question he has no difficulty in answering, and the observation on insects leads to some agreeable statements about the silk-worm, the bee, the cochineal and the Spanish fly, and finally to an interesting account of the way in which the great Swedish naturalist, Linnæus had been successfully called in by his King to suggest some means of checking the ravages of the worm that was doing such injury to the Swedish ships. Nor was all this mellifluous information imparted without a timely caution.

> There is, however [he concluded], a prudent Moderation to be used in Studies of this kind. The Knowledge of Nature may be ornamental, and it may be useful; but if, to attain an Eminence in that, we neglect the Knowledge and Practice of essential Duties, we deserve Reprehension. For there is no Rank in Natural Knowledge of equal Dignity and Importance with that of being a good Parent, a good Child, a good Husband or Wife, a good Neighbour or Friend, a good Subject or Citizen, that is, in short, a good Christian. Nicholas Gimcrack, therefore, who neglected the Care of his Family, to Pursue Butterflies, was a just Object of Ridicule, and we must give him up as fair Game to the satyrist.

A later letter is an amusing illustration of the manner in which he occasionally reminded his pupil that she must not take herself and Philosophy too seriously. Polly was at the time at the famous Wells of Bristol about which so much of the social pageantry of the eighteenth century centred.

> Your first Question, *What is the Reason the Water at this place, tho' cold at the Spring, becomes warm by Pumping?* it will be most prudent in me to forbear attempting to answer

[he said], till, by a more circumstantial account, you assure me of the Fact. I own I should expect that Operation to warm, not so much the Water pump'd, as the Person pumping. The Rubbing of dry Solids together has been long observ'd to produce Heat; but the like Effect has never yet, that I have heard, been produc'd by the mere Agitation of Fluids, or Friction of Fluids with Solids.

He might have let the matter rest there but he did not. The occasion was too opportune a one to impress upon Polly the importance of not jumping at conclusions too quickly for him to refrain from borrowing an apt story from Selden about a young woman who, finding herself in the presence of some gentlemen, when they were examining what they called a Chinese shoe, and carrying on a dispute about it, put in her word, and said modestly, "Gentlemen, are you sure it is a Shoe? Should not that be settled first?"

Then he passes to a highly edifying explanation of tidal movements in rivers, so simple that even a child, to say nothing of a bright-witted girl, could experience no difficulty in understanding it, and ends with the question:

After writing 6 Folio Pages of Philosophy to a young Girl, is it necessary to finish such a Letter with a Compliment? Is not such a Letter of itself a Compliment? Does it not say, she has a Mind thirsty after Knowledge, and capable of receiving it; and that the most agreeable Things one can write to her are those that tend to the Improvement of her Understanding?

With his next letter, he enclosed a paper containing his views on several points relating to the air and the evaporation of water, and informed Polly that he would shortly accompany her good mother again to Wanstead, when they could take a walk to some of Lord Tilney's ponds, and make a few experiments there that would explain the nature of tides more fully.

"Adieu, my dear little Philosopher," he exclaims in another letter, after suggesting that thirsty unfortunates at sea might be greatly relieved by sitting in sea water, and declaring that wet clothes do not create colds, whatever damp may do. No one catches cold by bathing, he said, and no clothes can be wetter than water itself.

In another letter, he makes some most readable observations upon the evaporation of rivers and the relations of colors to heat. The ignorant, he declared, suppose in some cases that a river loses itself by running underground, whereas in truth it has run up into the air. And, with reference to the interdependence of heat and color, he pursued this fresh train of ideas:

What signifies Philosophy that does not apply to some Use? May we not learn from hence, that black Clothes are not so fit to wear in a hot Sunny Climate or Season, as white ones; because in such Cloaths the Body is more heated by the Sun when we walk abroad, and are at the same time heated by the Exercise, which double Heat is apt to bring on putrid dangerous Fevers? That Soldiers and Seamen, who must march and labour in the Sun, should, in the East or West Indies have an Uniform of white? That Summer Hats, for Men or Women, should be white, as repelling that Heat which gives Headaches to many, and to some the fatal Stroke that the French call the *Coup de Soleil?* That the Ladies' Summer Hats, however, should be lined with Black, as not reverberating on their Faces those Rays which are reflected upwards from the Earth or Water? That the putting a white Cap of Paper or Linnen *within* the *Crown* of a black Hat, as some do, will not keep out the Heat, tho' it would if placed *without?* That Fruit-Walls being black'd may receive so much Heat from the Sun in the Daytime, as to continue warm in some degree thro' the Night, and thereby preserve the Fruit from Frosts, or forward its Growth?—with sundry other particulars of less or greater Importance, that will occur from time to time to attentive Minds?

Sometimes he exchanges language like this for such bantering questions as these: "Have you finish'd your Course of Philosophy? No more Doubts to be resolv'd? No more Questions to ask? If so, you may now be at full Leisure to improve yourself in Cards."

Another letter, dated June 7, 1762, was written in contemplation of the fact that he was about to leave the Old World for the New.

I fancy I feel a little like dying Saints [he said], who, in parting with those they love in this World, are only comforted with the Hope of more perfect Happiness in the next. I have, in America, Connections of the most engaging kind; and, happy as I have been in the Friendships here contracted, *those* promise me greater and more lasting Felicity. But God only knows whether these Promises shall be fulfilled.

Then came the letter written to her from a "wretched inn" at Portsmouth when he was on the point of embarking for America. It is none the less noteworthy because it reveals the fact that the thought of a marriage between Polly and his son had been a familiar one to him and her.

It (the paper on which he wrote) [he said] will tell my Polly how much her Friend is afflicted, that he must, perhaps, never again, see one for whom he has so sincere an Affection, join'd to so perfect an Esteem; who he once flatter'd himself might become his own, in the tender Relation of a Child, but can now entertain such pleasing Hopes no more. Will it tell *how much* he is afflicted? No, it can not.

Adieu, my dearest Child. I will call you so. Why should I not call you so, since I love you with all the Tenderness, All the Fondness of a Father? Adieu. May the God of all Goodness shower down his choicest Blessings upon you, and make you infinitely Happier, than that Event could have made you.

No wonder that the fatherless girl should have felt from the day that she received this letter until the day that she helped to assuage the pain of Franklin's last hours by her

loving ministrations that the heart in which she was so deeply cherished was one of these blessings. A few months later, Franklin writes to her from America a long, communicative letter, valuable among other reasons for the evidence that it affords of the ready sympathy with which he had entered into her circle of youthful friendships. He tells her that he shares her grief over her separation from her old friend Miss Pitt; "Pitty," he calls her in another place in this letter when he sends his love to her. He congratulates her upon the recovery of her "dear Dolly's" health. This was Dorothea Blount to whom he repeatedly refers in his letters to her. "I love that dear good Girl myself, and I love her other Friends," he said. Polly's statement in the letter, to which his letter was a reply, that she had lately had the pleasure of spending three days with Doctor and Mrs. Hawkesworth at the house of John Stanley, all warm friends of his, elicits from him the exclamation, "It was a sweet Society!"

These are but a few of the many details that make up this letter. Polly was one of the stimulating correspondents who brought out all that was best in Franklin's own intellectual resources, and the next time that he wrote to her from America he used this appreciative and grateful language. "The Ease, the Smoothness, the Purity of Diction, and Delicacy of Sentiment, that always appear in your Letters, never fail to delight me; but the tender filial Regard you constantly express for your old Friend is particularly engaging."

In later letters to Polly, written after his return to England in 1764, there are other lively passages like those that animated his letters to her before his return to America. On one occasion he answers a letter from her in verse.

A Muse, you must know, visited me this Morning! I see you are surpriz'd, as I was. I never saw one before. And

shall never see another. So I took the Opportunity of her Help to put the Answer into Verse, because I was some Verse in your Debt ever since you sent me the last Pair of Garters.

This letter is succeeded by a highly vivacious one from Paris where he enjoyed the honor of conversing with the King and Queen while they sat at meat. The latter letter is so full of sparkling fun that we cannot but regret that Franklin did not leave behind him equally detailed narratives of his travels in Germany and Holland, and over the face of Great Britain. All the way to Dover, he said, he was engaged in perpetual disputes with innkeepers, hostlers and postilions because he was prevented from seeing the country by the forward tilt of the hoods of the post-chaises in which he was driven; "they insisting that the Chaise leaning forward was an Ease to the Horses, and that the contrary would kill them." "I suppose the chaise leaning forward," he surmised, "looks to them like a Willingness to go forward, and that its hanging back shows a Reluctance." He concludes a humorous description of the seasickness of a number of green passengers between Dover and Calais, who made a hearty breakfast in the morning, before embarking, for fear that, if the wind should fail, they might not get over till supper time, with the remark, "So it seems there are Uncertainties, even beyond those between the Cup and the Lip." Impositions suffered by Franklin on the journey, the smooth highways of France, the contrast between the natural brunettes of Calais and Boulogne and the natural blondes of Abbéville, the Parisian complexions to which nature in every form was a total stranger, the *Grand Couvert* where the Royal Family supped in public, the magnificence of Versailles and Paris, to which nothing was wanting but cleanliness and tidiness, the pure water and fine streets of Paris, French politeness, the paintings, the plays and operas of the gayest capital in

the world all furnished topics for this delightful letter, composed in the high spirits born of rapid movement from one novel experience to another, and doubtless endued, when read, with the never failing charm that belongs to foreign scenes, scanned by the eyes of those we love. Franklin did not know which were the most rapacious, the English or the French boatmen or porters, but the latter had with their knavery, he thought, the most politeness. The only drawback about the roads in France, paved with smooth stone-like streets for many miles together, and flanked on each side with trees, was the labor which the peasants complained that they had to expend upon them for full two months in the year without pay. Whether this was truth, or whether, like Englishmen, they grumbled, cause or no cause, Franklin had not yet been able to fully inform himself.

Passing over his speculations as to the origin of the fair complexions of the women of Abbéville, where wheels and looms were going in every house, we stop for a moment to reproduce this unsparing description of the manner in which the women of Paris exercised the art which has never been known to excite any form of approval except feminine self-approval.

As to Rouge, they don't pretend to imitate Nature in laying it on. There is no gradual Diminution of the Colour, from the full Bloom in the Middle of the Cheek to the faint Tint near the Sides, nor does it show itself differently in different Faces. I have not had the Honour of being at any Lady's Toylette to see how it is laid on, but I fancy I can tell you how it is or may be done. Cut a hole of 3 Inches Diameter in a Piece of Paper; place it on the Side of your Face in such a Manner as that the Top of the Hole may be just under your Eye; then with a Brush dipt in the Colour, paint Face and Paper together; so when the Paper is taken off there will remain a round Patch of Red exactly the Form of the Hole. This is the Mode, from the Actresses on the Stage upwards thro' all

Ranks of Ladies to the Princesses of the Blood, but it stops there, the Queen not using it, having in the Serenity, Complacence, and Benignity that shine so eminently in, or rather through her Countenance, sufficient Beauty, tho' now an old Woman, to do extreamly well without it.

In picturing the royal supper, with its gold service and its *À boire pour le Roy* and its *À boire pour la Reine*, Franklin even draws a sketch of the table so that Polly can see just where the King and Queen and Mesdames Adelaide, Victoria, Louise and Sophie sat, and just where Sir John Pringle and himself stood, when they were brought by an officer of the court to be talked to by the royal personages. This letter also contains what is perhaps the handsomest compliment ever paid to French politeness: "It seems to be a Point settled here universally, that Strangers are to be treated with Respect; and one has just the same Deference shewn one here by being a Stranger, as in England by being a Lady."

The grave statement in this letter that travelling is one way of lengthening life, at least in appearance, is made the starting-point for the laughing statement that the writer himself had perhaps suffered a greater change in his own person than he could have done in six years at home.

I had not been here Six Days [he declared] before my Taylor and Perruquier had transform'd me into a Frenchman. Only think what a Figure I make in a little Bag-Wig and naked Ears! They told me I was become 20 Years younger, and look'd very *galante;* So being in Paris where the Mode is to be sacredly follow'd I was once very near making Love to my Friend's Wife.

The next words in the letter are also full of effervescing gaiety: "This Letter shall cost you a Shilling, and you may consider it cheap, when you reflect, that it has cost me at least 50 Guineas to get into the Situation, that enables me to write it. Besides, I might, if I had staied

at home, have won perhaps two Shillings of you at Cribbidge."

Among the best of his subsequent letters is the one—instinct with his usual wisdom and good feeling—in which he advises Polly to return to her aunt, Mrs. Tickell, as soon as a temporary separation was at an end, and continue by every means in her power, no matter how sorely tried by her aunt's infirmities, to make the remainder of the latter's days as comfortable as possible. Polly adopted the advice of this letter, and reaped her reward not only in the gratified sense of duty, upon which the letter laid such emphasis, but also in the fortune which she received upon the death of Mrs. Tickell.

In 1770, she was married to Dr. William Hewson, a brilliant physician, who was prematurely cut off by surgical infection, leaving her the mother of three young children. It was probably of him that she wrote to Franklin from Margate in the year preceding her marriage with him that she had met with a very sensible physician the day before and would not have Franklin or her mother surprised if she should run off with this young man. To be sure, this would be an imprudent step at the discreet age of thirty; but there was no saying what one should do, if solicited by a man of an insinuating address and good person, though he might be too young for one, and not yet established in his profession. The letter began with a welcome to Franklin, who had just returned from the Continent, and he was quick to respond with a pleasantry to her communication about the young physician.

> There are certain circumstances in Life, sometimes [he said], wherein 'tis perhaps best not to hearken to Reason. For instance; possibly, if the Truth were known, I have Reason to be jealous of this same insinuating, handsome young Physician; but as it flatters more my Vanity, and therefore gives me more Pleasure, to suppose you were in Spirits on acc^{t} of my safe Return, I shall turn a deaf Ear to

Reason in this Case, as I have done with Success in twenty others.

In a subsequent letter, Franklin tells Polly that her mother has been complaining of her head more than ever before.

If she stoops, or looks, or bends her Neck downwards, on any occasion, it is with great Pain and Difficulty, that sne gets her Head up again. She has, therefore, borrowed a Breast and Neck Collar of Mrs. Wilkes, such as Misses wear, and now uses it to keep her Head up. Mr. Strahan has invited us all to dine there to-morrow, but she has excused herself. Will you come, and go with me? If you cannot well do that, you will at least be with us on Friday to go to Lady Strachans.

His own head, he says, is better, owing, he is fully persuaded, to his extreme abstemiousness for some days past at home, but he is not without apprehensions that, being to dine abroad that day, the next day, and the day after, he may inadvertently bring it on again, if he does not think of his little monitor and guardian angel, and make use of the proper and very pertinent clause she proposes in his grace. This clause was doubtless suggested by his previous letter about the insinuating, handsome physician in which he had written to his little monitor that he had just come home from a venison feast, where he had drunk more than a philosopher ought. His next letter warily refrains from giving his flat approval to Dr. Hewson's proposal. His attitude towards Mrs. Greene's marriage had been equally cautious. He was probably of the opinion that, along with the other good advice, that finds its way to the moon, is not a little relating to nuptial engagements. The whole letter is stamped with the good sense and wholesome feeling which such situations never failed to evoke from him.

I assure you [he said] that no Objection has occurr'd to me. His Person you see; his Temper and his Understanding you can judge of; his Character, for anything I have ever heard, is unblemished; his Profession, with the Skill in it he is suppos'd to have, will be sufficient to support a Family, and, therefore, considering the Fortune you have in your Hands (tho' any future Expectation from your Aunt should be disappointed) I do not see but that the Agreement may be a rational one on both sides.

I see your Delicacy, and your Humility too; for you fancy that if you do not prove a great Fortune, you will not be lov'd; but I am sure that were I in his situation in every respect, knowing you so well as I do, and esteeming you so highly, I should think you a Fortune sufficient for me without a Shilling.

Having thus expressed his concern, equal to any father's, he said, for her happiness, and dispelled the idea on her part that he did not favor the proposal, because he did not immediately advise its acceptance, he left, he concluded, the rest to her sound judgment, of which no one had a greater share, and would not be too inquisitive as to her particular reasons, doubts and fears.

They were married only to share the bright vision of unclouded married happiness for some four years, and then to be separated by that tragic agency which few but Franklin have ever been able to invest with the peaceful radiance of declining day. A letter from Franklin to Mrs. Hewson, written shortly after the marriage, laughs as it were through its tears over the mournful plight in which Dolly and he have been left by her desertion, but it shows that he is beginning to get into touch with all the changes brought about by the new connection. We have already seen how fully his heart went out to his godson who sprang from the union. He has a word to say about him in another letter to Mrs. Hewson after a jest at the expense of Mrs. Stevenson's Jacobite prejudices.

I thank you [he said] for your intelligence about my Godson. I believe you are sincere, when you say you think him as fine a Child as you wish to see. He had cut two Teeth, and three, in another Letter, make five; for I know you never write Tautologies. If I have over-reckoned, the Number will be right by this Time. His being like me in so many Particulars pleases me prodigiously; and I am persuaded there is another, which you have omitted, tho' it must have occurr'd to you while you were putting them down. Pray let him have everything he likes; I think it of great Consequence while the Features of the Countenance are forming; it gives them a pleasant Air, and, that being once become natural and fix'd by Habit, the Face is ever after the handsomer for it, and on that much of a Person's good Fortune and Success in Life may depend. Had I been cross'd as much in my Infant Likings and Inclinations as you know I have been of late Years, I should have been, I was going to say, not near so handsome; but as the Vanity of that Expression would offend other Folk's Vanity, I change it out of regard to them, and say, a great deal more homely.

His next letter is written to Mrs. Hewson, then a widow, from Philadelphia, after his return from his second mission to England, and tells her that the times are not propitious for the emigration to America, which she was contemplating, but expresses the hope that they might all be happy together in Philadelphia a little later on.

When he next writes, it is from Paris on January 12, 1777. "My Dear, Dear Polly," he begins, "Figure to yourself an old Man, with grey Hair Appearing under a Martin Fur Cap, among the Powder'd Heads of Paris. It is this odd Figure that salutes you, with handfuls of Blessings on you and your dear little ones." He had failed to bring about a union between Polly and his son, but, inveterate matchmaker that he was, this letter shows that he still had, as a grandfather, the designs on Eliza, Polly's daughter, that he had disclosed in his previous letter to Polly, when he expressed the hope

that he might be alive to dance with Mrs. Stevenson at the wedding of Ben and this child. "I give him (Ben)," it said, with a French grimace between its lines, "a little French Language and Address, and then send him over to pay his Respects to Miss Hewson." In another letter, he tells Polly that, if she would take Ben under her care, as she had offered to do, he would set no bad example to her *other* children. Two or three years later, he wrote to her from Philadelphia that Ben was finishing his studies at college, and would, he thought, make her a good son. Indeed a few days later he referred to Ben in another letter as "your son Ben."

"Does my Godson," he asked in a letter from France to Mrs. Hewson, along with many affectionate inquiries about his "dear old Friend," Mrs. Stevenson, and other English friends of theirs, "remember anything of his Doctor Papa? I suppose not. Kiss the dear little Fellow for me; not forgetting the others. I long to see them and you." Then in a postscript he tells Mrs. Hewson that, at the ball in Nantes, Temple took notice that there were no heads less than five, and that there were a few seven lengths of the face above the forehead. "You know," he observes with the old sportive humor, "that those who have practis'd Drawing, as he has, attend more to Proportions, than People in common do." In another letter from Passy, he asks Mrs. Hewson whether Jacob Viny, who was in the wheel business, could not make up a coach with the latest useful improvements and bring them all over in it. In the same letter, he inserts a word to relieve Mrs. Stevenson of her anxiety about her swelled ankles which she attributed to the dropsy; and the paragraph ends with the words, "My tender Love to her."

As Polly's children grew older, the references to them in Franklin's letters to the mother became more and more frequent and affectionate.

You cannot be more pleas'd [he wrote to her from Passy], in talking about your Children, your Methods of Instructing them, and the Progress they make, than I am in hearing it, and in finding, that, instead of following the idle Amusements, which both your Fortune and the Custom of the Age might have led you into, your Delight and your Duty go together, by employing your Time in the Education of your Offspring. This is following Nature and Reason, instead of Fashion; than which nothing is more becoming the Character of a Woman of Sense and Virtue.

Repeatedly Franklin sends little books to Mrs. Hewson's children, and on one occasion he sends two different French grammars, one of which, after the French master of her children had taken his choice, was to be given to his godson, as his New Year's gift, together with the two volumes of *Synonymes Françaises*. At one time before he left France, he thought of visiting Mrs. Hewson in England and asked her advice about doing so in the existing state of the British temper. When she counselled him against the journey, he wrote to her, "Come, my dear Friend, live with me while I stay here, and go with me, if I do go, to America." As the result of this invitation, Mrs. Hewson and her children spent the winter of 1784–85 with him at Passy, and his first letter to her, after she returned to England, bears indications in every line of the regret inspired by his loss of her society, after, to use his own words, he had passed a long winter in a manner that made it appear the shortest of any he ever spent. One of his peculiarities was to make a point of telling a friend anything of a pleasant nature that he had heard about him. Since her departure, M. LeVeillard in particular, he said, had told him at different times what indeed he knew long since, "*C'est une bien digne Femme, cette Madame Hewson, une très amable Femme.*" The letter then terminates with the request that, when she prayed at church for all that travelled by land or sea, she

would think of her ever affectionate friend, but starts up again in a postscript, in which he sends his love to William, Thomas and Eliza, Mrs. Hewson's children, and asks their mother to tell them that he missed their cheerful prattle. Temple being sick, and Benjamin at Paris, he had found it very *triste* breakfasting alone, and sitting alone, and without any tea in the evening. "My love to every one of the Children," is his postscript to his next letter, in which, when he was on the eve of leaving France, he told Mrs. Hewson that he said nothing to persuade her to go with him or to follow him, because he knew that she did not usually act from persuasion, but judgment. In nothing was he wiser than in his reserve about giving advice when the persons to be advised were themselves in possession of all the facts of the case essential to a proper decision. When he touched at Southampton, Mrs. Hewson was not yet resolved to sever the ties that connected her with England, but subsequently she did come over with her children to Philadelphia, and made it her home for the rest of her life. The last letter but one that Franklin wrote to her before she sailed is among the most readable letters in the correspondence. Referring to three letters of hers, that had not reached him until nearly ten years after they were written, he said:

This pacquet had been received by Mr. Bache, after my departure for France, lay dormant among his papers during all my absence, and has just now broke out upon me, *like words*, that had been, as somebody says, *congealed in northern air*. Therein I find all the pleasing little family history of your children; how William had begun to spell, overcoming, by strength of memory, all the difficulty occasioned by the common wretched alphabet, while you were convinced of the utility of our new one; how Tom, genius-like, struck out new paths, and, relinquishing the old names of the letters, called U *bell* and P *bottle;* how Eliza began to grow jolly, that is,

fat and handsome, resembling Aunt Rooke, whom I used to call *my lovely*. Together with all the *then* news of Lady Blount's having produced at length a boy; of Dolly's being well, and of poor good Catherine's decease; of your affairs with Muir and Atkinson, and of their contract for feeding the fish in the channel; of the Vinys and their jaunt to Cambridge in the long carriage; of Dolly's journey to Wales with Mrs. Scott; of the Wilkeses, the Pearces, Elphinstones, &c.; —concluding with a kind of promise, that, as soon as the ministry and Congress agreed to make peace, I should have you with me in America. That peace has been some time made; but, alas! the promise is not yet fulfilled.

Rarely, indeed, we imagine has one person, even though a father, or a husband, ever enveloped the life of another with such an atmosphere of pure, caressing, intimate sympathy and affection as surrounds these letters. Perhaps, our review of them would be incomplete, if we did not also recall the comments made by Franklin to Polly upon the death of her mother, and Polly's own comments upon the close of his life.

The Departure of my dearest Friend [he wrote to Polly from Passy], which I learn from your last Letter, greatly affects me. To meet with her once more in this Life was one of the principal Motives of my proposing to visit England again, before my Return to America. The last Year carried off my Friends Dr. Pringle, and Dr. Fothergill, Lord Kaims, and Lord le Despencer. This has begun to take away the rest, and strikes the hardest. Thus the Ties I had to that Country, and indeed to the World in general, are loosened one by one, and I shall soon have no Attachment left to make me unwilling to follow.

This is the description given by Mrs. Hewson of his last years after stating that during the two years that preceded his death he did not experience so much as two months of exemption from pain, yet never uttered one repining or peevish word.

When the pain was not too violent to be amused, he employed himself with his books, his pen, or in conversation with his friends; and upon every occasion displayed the clearness of his intellect, and the cheerfulness of his temper. Even when the intervals from pain were so short, that his words were frequently interrupted, I have known him to hold a discourse in a sublime strain of piety. I never shall forget one day that I passed with our friend last summer (1789). I found him in bed in great agony; but, when that agony abated a little, I asked him if I should read to him. He said, "Yes," and the first book I met with was "Johnson's Lives of the Poets." I read the "Life of Watts," who was a favorite author with Dr. Franklin; and instead of lulling him to sleep, it roused him to a display of the powers of his memory and his reason. He repeated several of Watts's "Lyric Poems," and descanted upon their sublimity in a strain worthy of them and of their pious author.

Sublime or not, it cannot be denied that the poems of Dr. Watts have been a staff of comfort and support to many a pilgrim on his way to the "fields of endless light where the saints and angels walk."

Another very dear English friend of Franklin was William Strahan, King's Printer, the partner at one time of Thomas Cadell the Elder, and the publisher of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.* The frequent references in Frankin's letters to him to Madeira wine would seem to indicate that, if it had been possible for such a temperate man as Franklin to have what is known as a boon companion, Strahan would have been he. On one occasion, Franklin writes to him that he has a great opinion of his wisdom (Madeira apart), on another, after twitting him good-humoredly with the restless condition of England, he observes: "You will say my *Advice* 'smells of *Madeira.*' You are right. This foolish Letter is mere chitchat *between ourselves* over the *second bottle.*"

The friendship between the two began before they had even seen each other. From writing to each other from time to time, in the course of business, about books and stationery, they finally came to feel as if they really knew each other, and to exchange familiar messages on that footing. In his earliest letter to Strahan, Franklin signs himself, "Your humble servant unknown," but, before he has even carried into execution the floating intention of going over to England, which, again and again, manifests itself in his letters to Strahan, his spouse is corresponding with Mrs. Strahan, and he has arranged a match between Sally and Master Billy, one of Strahan's sons. "My compliments to Mrs. Strahan, and to your promising son, perhaps one day mine," he wrote to Strahan several years before his first mission to England, "God send our children good and suitable matches, for I begin to feel a parents' cares in that respect, and fondly wish to see them well settled before I leave them." A little later, he has arranged the match so entirely to his satisfaction, and, as the event proved, to that of Strahan too, that he writes glibly to Strahan of William Strahan as "our son Billy" and of Sally as "our daughter Sally." The same letter foreshadows the mission to England that brought the two friends for the first time face to face. "Our Assembly," it said, "talk of sending me to England speedily. Then look out sharp, and if a fat old fellow should come to your printing-house and request a little smouting, depend upon it 'tis your affectionate friend and humble servant."

The earlier cis-Atlantic letters of Franklin to Strahan are mainly letters of business over which we need not linger here; but they contain some paragraphs of general interest besides those relating to Sally and Master Billy. In one place, Franklin declares that he is glad that the Polybius, which he had ordered from Strahan, did not come; it was intended for his son, who was, when the order

was given, in the army, and apparently bent on a military life, but that, as peace had cut off the prospect of advancement in that way, his son would apply himself to other business. In any event, Polybius would appear to have been a rather pedantic authority for the military operations of the American backwoods. The other business to which William Franklin had decided to apply himself was that of the profession, which, in the opinion of the general public, approximates most nearly to a state of warfare—the law, and, in the letters from Franklin to Strahan, William's altered plans are brought home to us in the form of orders for law books and the request that Strahan would have William entered as a student at the Inns of Court.

These earlier letters also contain some piquant comments on colonial conditions. Such are the remarks prompted by Pope's sneer in the *Dunciad* at the supposed popularity of the poetaster, Ward, in "ape-and-monkey climes."

That Poet has many Admirers here, and the Reflection he somewhere casts on the Plantations as if they had a Relish for such Writers as Ward only, is injurious. Your Authors know but little of the Fame they have on this side of the Ocean. We are a kind of Posterity in respect to them. We read their Works with perfect impartiality, being at too great distance to be byassed by the Factions, Parties and Prejudices that prevail among you. We know nothing of their Personal Failings; the Blemishes in their Character never reaches (sic) us, and therefore the bright and amiable part strikes us with its full Force. They have never offended us or any of our Friends, and we have no competitions with them, therefore we praise and admire them without Restraint. Whatever Thomson writes send me a dozen copies of. I had read no poetry for several years, and almost lost the Relish of it, till I met with his Seasons. That charming Poet has brought more Tears of Pleasure into my Eyes than all I ever read

before. I wish it were in my Power to return him any Part of the Joy he has given me.

Many years later, some appreciative observations of the same critic on the poetry of Cowper were to make even that unhappy poet little less proud than the girl in the Tatler with the new pair of garters.

The friendship, initiated by the early letters of Franklin to Strahan, ripened fast into the fullest and freest intimacy when Franklin went over to England in 1757. They were both printers, to begin with, and were both very social in their tastes. Strahan was besides no mean political *quid nunc*, and Franklin was all his life an active politician. So interesting were the reports that he made to Franklin at the latter's request on political conditions in England, after Franklin returned to America from his first mission to that country, that Franklin acknowledged his debt in these flattering terms:

Your accounts are so clear, circumstantial, and complete, that tho' there is nothing too much, nothing is wanting to give us, as I imagine, a more perfect knowledge of your publick affairs than most poeple have that live among you. The characters of your speakers and actors are so admirably sketch'd, and their views so plainly opened, that we see and know everybody; they all become of our acquaintance. So excellent a manner of writing seems to me a superfluous gift to a mere printer. If you do not commence author for the benefit of mankind, you will certainly be found guilty hereafter of burying your talent. It is true that it will puzzle the Devil himself to find anything else to accuse you of, but remember he may make a great deal of that. If I were king (which may God in mercy to us all prevent) I should certainly make you the historiographer of my reign. There could be but one objection—I suspect you might be a little partial in my favor.

"Straney" was the affectionate nickname by which Franklin addressed Strahan after he came into personal

contact with him, and, as usual, the friendship that he formed for the head of the family drew all the other members of the family within its folds. His friendship was rarely, we believe, confined to one member of a family. That was the reason why, in one of his last letters to Mrs. Hewson, he could picture his condition in Philadelphia in these terms: "The companions of my youth are indeed almost all departed, but I find an agreeable society among their children and grandchildren." And so, in Franklin's relations with the Strahans, we find his affection taking in all the members of the household. "My dear Love to Mrs. Strahan," he says in a letter to Strahan from Philadelphia in 1762, "and bid her be well for all our sakes. Remember me affectionately to Rachey and my little Wife and to your promising Sons my young Friends Billy, George and Andrew." A similar message in another letter to Strahan is followed by the statement, "I hope to live to see George a Bishop," and, a few days afterwards, Franklin recurs to the subject in these terms: "Tell me whether George is to be a Church or Presbyterian parson. I know you are a Presbyterian yourself; but then I think you have more sense than to stick him into a priesthood that admits of no promotion. If he was a dull lad it might not be amiss, but George has parts, and ought to aim at a mitre."

There are other repeated references in Franklin's letters to Strahan's daughter whom Franklin called his wife. "I rejoice to hear," he says in one of them, "that Mrs. Strahan is recovering; that your family in general is well, and that my little woman in particular is so, and has not forgot our tender connection." In a letter, which we have already quoted, after charging Strahan with not being as good-natured as he ought to be, he says, "I am glad, however that you have this fault; for a man without faults is a hateful creature. He puts all his friends out of countenance; but I love you exceedingly."

As for Strahan, he loved Franklin so exceedingly that in his effort to bring Deborah over to England he did not stop short, as we have seen, of letting her know that, when she arrived, there would be a ready-made son-in-law to greet her. Indeed the idea of fixing Franklin in England appears to have been the darling project of his heart if we are to judge by the frequency with which Franklin had to oppose Deborah's fear of the sea to his importunity. More than once it must have appeared to him as if the eloquence on which he prided himself so greatly would bear down all difficulties. After Franklin in 1762 had been for two nights on board of the ship at Portsmouth which was to take him to America, but was kept in port by adverse winds, he wrote to Strahan:

> The Attraction of Reason is at present for the other side of the Water, but that of Inclination will be for this side. You know which usually prevails. I shall probably make but this one Vibration, and settle here forever. Nothing will prevent it, if I can, as I hope I can, prevail with Mrs. F. to accompany me.

That, he said in a subsequent letter, would be the great difficulty. The next year, he even wrote to Strahan from America, after his journey of eleven hundred and forty miles on the American continent that year, that no friend could wish him more in England than he did himself, though, before he went, everything, in which he was concerned, must be so settled in America as to make another return to it unnecessary. But, in the course of his life, Franklin, with his sensibility to social attentions and freedom from provincial restrictions, professed his preference for so many parts of the world as a place of residence that statements of this kind should not be accepted too literally.

In one of his letters to Strahan, before his return to England, on his second mission, there is a sly stroke that

gives us additional insight into the intimate relations which the two men had contracted with each other.

You tell me [Franklin said] that the value I set on your political letters is a strong proof that my judgment is on the decline. People seldom have friends kind enough to tell them that disagreeable truth, however useful it might be to know it; and indeed I learn more from what you say than you intended I should; for it convinces me that you had observed the decline for some time past in other instances, as 'tis very unlikely you should see it first in my good opinion of your writings.

With Franklin's return to England on his second mission, the old friendly intercourse between Strahan and himself was resumed, but it came wholly to an end during the American Revolution; for Strahan was the King's Printer, an inveterate Tory, and one of the ministerial phalanx, which followed George III. blindly. When the dragon's teeth sown by the King began to spring up in serried ranks, Franklin wrote, but did not send, to Strahan the letter, which is so well known as to almost make transcription unnecessary.

Mr. Strahan,

You are a Member of Parliament, and one of that Majority which has doomed my Country to Destruction.—You have begun to burn our Towns, and murder our People.—Look upon your Hands! They are stained with the Blood of your Relations!—You and I were long Friends:—You are now my Enemy,—and I am

Yours,

B. Franklin.

In this instance, also, Franklin was but true to his practice of sometimes inserting a quip or a quirk into even the gravest contexts.

Not until December 4, 1781, does the silence between the two friends, produced by the Revolution, appear to

have been really broken. On that date, Franklin wrote to Strahan a formal letter, addressing him no longer as "Dear Straney," but as "Dear Sir," and concluding with none of the former affectionate terminations, but in the stiffest terms of obsequious eighteenth century courtesy. The ostensible occasion for the letter was a package of letters which he asked Strahan to forward to Mrs. Strange, the wife of Robert Strange, the celebrated engraver, whose address he did not remember. He also asked Strahan for a copy of the *Tully on Old Age*, which Franklin had printed in Philadelphia many years before, and had endeavored to sell in part in London through Strahan. Well maintained as the reserve of this letter is, it is plainly enough that of a man, who is feeling his way a little cautiously, because he does not know just how his approaches will be received. Between the lines, we can see that the real object of the requests about the package of letters and the Latin classic was to find out whether Franklin's treason had killed all desire on Straney's part to open a second bottle with him. There is a by-reference to Didot le Jeune, who was bidding fair to carry the art of fine printing to a high pitch of perfection, and an expression of pleasure that Strahan had married his daughter happily, and that his prosperity continued. "I hope," Franklin said, "it may never meet with any Interruption having still, tho' at present divided by public Circumstances, a Remembrance of our ancient private Friendship." Nor did he fail to present his affectionate respects to Mrs. Strahan and his love to Strahan's children. The olive branch was distinctly held out, but, just about the time that this letter reached Strahan, the ministry, of which he was such an unfaltering adherent, suffered a defeat on the American question, and the Tully was transmitted by Mrs. Strange's husband with the statement that he really believed that Strahan himself would have written to Franklin but for the smart

of the Parliamentary disaster of that morning. Several years later, there came to Franklin an acknowledgment by Strahan of the very friendly and effectual patronage which had been afforded to a distant kinswoman of his at Philadelphia by Franklin's family. The letter also eagerly urged Franklin to come to England once more, and with Franklin's reply, signed "yours ever most affectionately," the old *entente* was fully re-established. In the high animal spirits, aroused by the renewal of the former relationship, he fell back upon the technical terms of the printing house, so familiar to the two friends, for the purpose of illustrating his pet proposition that England would never be at rest until all the enormous salaries, emoluments and patronage of her great offices were abolished, and these offices were made, instead of places of profit, places of expense and burthen.

Ambition and avarice [he said] are each of them strong Passions, and when they are united in the same Persons, and have the same Objects in view for their Gratification, they are too strong for Public Spirit and Love of Country, and are apt to produce the most violent Factions and Contentions. They should therefore be separated, and made to act one against the other. Those Places, to speak in our old stile (Brother Type) may be for the good of the *Chapel*, but they are bad for the Master, as they create constant Quarrels that hinder the Business. For example, here are near two Months that your Government has been employed *in getting its form to press;* which is not yet fit to *work on*, every Page of it being *squabbled*, and the whole ready to fall into *pye*. The Founts too must be very scanty, or strangely *out of sorts*, since your *Compositors* cannot find either *upper* or *lower case Letters* sufficient to set the word ADMINISTRATION, but are forc'd to be continually *turning for them*. However, to return to common (tho' perhaps too saucy) Language, don't despair; you have still one resource left, and that not a bad one, since it may reunite the Empire. We have some Remains of Affection for you, and

shall always be ready to receive and take care of you in Case of Distress. So if you have not Sense and Virtue enough to govern yourselves, e'en dissolve your present old crazy Constitution, and *send members to Congress.*

This is the letter that Franklin said was mere chit-chat between themselves over the second bottle. Where America was concerned, Strahan was almost credulous enough to have even swallowed the statement in Franklin's humorous letter "To the Editor of a Newspaper," written about the time of the Stamp Act in ridicule of English ignorance respecting America, that the grand leap of the whale in his chase of the cod up the Fall of Niagara was esteemed by all who had seen it as one of the finest spectacles in Nature. In 1783, Captain Nathaniel Falconer, another faithful friend of Franklin, wrote to him with the true disregard of an old sea-dog for spelling and syntax: "I have been over to your old friends Mr. Strawns and find him just the same man, believes every Ly he hears against the United States, the French Army and our Army have been killing each other, and that we shall be glad to come to this country again." In reply, Franklin said: "I have still a regard for Mr. Strahan in remembrance of our ancient Friendship, tho' he has as a Member of Parliament dipt his Hands in our Blood. He was always as credulous as you find him." And, if what Franklin further says in this letter is true, Strahan was not only credulous himself but not above publishing mendacious letters about America as written from New York, which in point of fact were fabricated in London. A little over a year later, when the broken bones of the ancient friendship had reknit, Franklin had his chance to remind Strahan of the extent to which he and those of the same mind with him had been deceived by their gross misconceptions of America. His opportunity came in the form of a reply to a letter from Strahan withholding his assent from the idea of Franklin, so utterly repugnant to

the working principles of Strahan's party associates, that public service should be rendered gratuitously. "There are, I make no doubt," said Franklin "many wise and able Men, who would take as much Pleasure in governing for nothing, as they do in playing Chess for nothing. It would be one of the noblest of Amusements." Then, when he has fortified the proposition by some real or fancied illustrations, drawn from French usages, he proceeds to unburden his mind to Strahan with a degree of candor that must have made the latter wince a little at times.

I allow you [he said] all the Force of your Joke upon the Vagrancy of our Congress. They have a right to sit *where* they please, of which perhaps they have made too much Use by shifting too often. But they have two other Rights; those of sitting *when* they please, and as *long* as they please, in which methinks they have the advantage of your Parliament; for they cannot be dissolved by the Breath of a Minister, or sent packing as you were the other day, when it was your earnest desire to have remained longer together.

You "fairly acknowledge, that the late War terminated quite contrary to your Expectation." Your expectation was ill founded; for you would not believe your old Friend, who told you repeatedly, that by those Measures England would lose her Colonies, as Epictetus warned in vain his Master that he would break his Leg. You believ'd rather the Tales you heard of our Poltroonery and Impotence of Body and Mind. Do you not remember the Story you told me of the Scotch sergeant, who met with a Party of Forty American Soldiers, and, tho' alone, disarm'd them all, and brought them in Prisoners? A Story almost as Improbable as that of the Irishman, who pretended to have alone taken and brought in Five of the Enemy by *surrounding* them. And yet, my Friend, sensible and Judicious as you are, but partaking of the general Infatuation, you seemed to believe it.

The Word *general* puts me in mind of a General, your General Clarke, who had the Folly to say in my hearing at Sir John Pringle's, that, with a Thousand British grenadiers, he would

undertake to go from one end of America to the other, and geld all the Males, partly by force and partly by a little Coaxing. It is plain he took us for a species of Animals, very little superior to Brutes. The Parliament too believ'd the stories of another foolish General, I forget his Name, that the Yankeys never *felt bold*. Yankey was understood to be a sort of Yahoo, and the Parliament did not think the Petitions of such Creatures were fit to be received and read in so wise an Assembly. What was the consequence of this monstrous Pride and Insolence? You first sent small Armies to subdue us, believing them more than sufficient, but soon found yourselves obliged to send greater; these, whenever they ventured to penetrate our Country beyond the Protection of their Ships, were either repulsed and obliged to scamper out, or were surrounded, beaten and taken Prisoners. An America Planter, who had never seen Europe, was chosen by us to Command our Troops, and continued during the whole War. This Man sent home to you, one after another, five of your best Generals baffled, their Heads bare of Laurels, disgraced even in the opinion of their Employers.

Your contempt of our Understandings, in Comparison with your own, appeared to be not much better founded than that of our Courage, if we may judge by this Circumstance, that, in whatever Court of Europe a Yankey negociator appeared, the wise British Minister was routed, put in a passion, pick'd a quarrel with your Friends, and was sent home with a Flea in his Ear.

But after all, my dear Friend, do not imagine that I am vain enough to ascribe our Success to any superiority in any of those Points. I am too well acquainted with all the Springs and Levers of our Machine, not to see, that our human means were unequal to our undertaking, and that, if it had not been for the Justice of our Cause, and the consequent Interposition of Providence, in which we had Faith, we must have been ruined. If I had ever before been an Atheist, I should now have been convinced of the Being and Government of a Deity! It is he who abases the Proud and favours the Humble. May we never forget his Goodness to us, and may our future Conduct manifest our Gratitude.

It was characteristic of Franklin to open his heart to a friend in this candid way even upon sensitive topics, and there can be no better proof of the instinctive confidence of his friends in the essential good feeling that underlay such candor than the fact that they never took offence at utterances of this sort. They knew too well the constancy of affection and placability of temper which caused him justly to say of himself in a letter to Strahan, "I like immortal friendships, but not immortal enmities."

The retrospective letter from which we have just quoted had its genial afterglow as all Franklin's letters had, when he had reason to think that he had written something at which a relative or a friend might take umbrage.

But let us leave these serious Reflections [he went on], and converse with our usual Pleasantry. I remember your observing once to me as we sat together in the House of Commons, that no two Journeymen Printers, within your Knowledge, had met with such Success in the World as ourselves. You were then at the head of your Profession, and soon afterwards became a Member of Parliament. I was an Agent for a few Provinces, and now act for them all. But we have risen by different Modes. I, as a Republican Printer, always liked a Form well *plain'd down;* being averse to those *overbearing* Letters that hold their Heads so *high*, as to hinder their Neighbours from appearing. You, as a Monarchist, chose to work upon *Crown* Paper, and found it profitable; while I work'd upon *pro patria* (often call'd *Fools Cap*) with no less advantage. Both our *Heaps hold out* very well, and we seem likely to make a pretty good day's Work of it. With regard to Public Affairs (to continue in the same stile) it seems to me that the Compositors in your Chapel do not *cast off their Copy* well, nor perfectly understand *Imposing;* their *Forms*, too, are continually pester'd by the *Outs* and *Doubles*, that are not easy to be corrected. And I think they were wrong in laying aside some *Faces*, and particularly certain *Headpieces*, that would have been both useful and ornamental. But, Courage! The Business may still flourish with good

Management; and the Master become as rich as any of the Company.

Less than two years after these merry words were penned, Franklin wrote to Andrew Strahan, Strahan's son, saying, "I condole with you most sincerely on the Departure of your good Father and Mother, my old and beloved Friends."

Equally dear to Franklin, though in a different way, was Jonathan Shipley, the Bishop of St. Asaph's, whom he termed in a letter to Georgiana, one of the Bishop's daughters, "that most honoured and ever beloved Friend." In this same letter, Franklin speaks of the Bishop as the "good Bishop," and then, perhaps, not unmindful of the unflinching servility with which the Bench of Bishops had supported the American policy of George III., exclaims, "Strange, that so simple a Character should sufficiently distinguish one of that sacred Body!"

During the dispute with the Colonies, the Bishop was one of the wise Englishmen, who could have settled the questions at issue between England and America, to the ultimate satisfaction of both countries, with little difficulty, if they had been given a *carte blanche* to agree with Franklin on the terms upon which the future dependence of America was to be based. Two productions of his, the "Sermon before the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts" and his "Speech intended to have been spoken on the Bill for Altering the Charters of the Colony of the Massachusetts Bay," were among the compositions which really influenced the course of the events that preceded the American Revolution. We know from Franklin's pen that the sermon was for a time "universally approved and applauded," and, in letters to Thomas Cushing, he said that the speech was admired in England as a "Masterpiece of Eloquence and Wisdom," and "had an extraordinary Effect, in changing the Senti-

ments of Multitudes with regard to America." For both sermon and speech the Bishop was all the more to be honored by Americans, because, as Franklin observed to Galloway of the sermon, the Bishop's censure of the mother country's treatment of the Colonies, however tenderly expressed, could not recommend him at court or conduce in the least to his promotion. On the contrary, it probably cost him the most splendid temporal reward that could be conferred upon a Churchman, the Archbishopric of Canterbury; for, when Charles James Fox was desirous of elevating him to that exalted office, the King defeated his intentions by hastily appointing another person to it.

At Chilbolton, by Twyford, the country seat of the Bishop, some of the most pleasant days that Franklin spent in England were passed. So fond of Franklin were the Bishop and his wife that the latter carried in her memory even the ages of all Franklin's children and grandchildren. As he was on the point of leaving Twyford, at the end of the three weeks' visit, during which he began the *Autobiography*, she insisted on his remaining that day, so that they might all celebrate the anniversary of Benjamin Bache's birth together. Accordingly, at dinner there was among other things a floating island, such as the hosts always had on the several birthdays of their own six children; all of whom, with one exception, were present as well as a clergyman's widow upwards of one hundred years old. The story is thus told by Franklin to his wife:

> The chief Toast of the Day was Master Benjamin Bache, which the venerable old Lady began in a Bumper of Mountain. The Bishop's Lady politely added, *and that he may be as good a Man as his Grandfather.* I said I hop'd he would be *much better.* The Bishop, still more complaisant than his Lady, said, "We will compound the Matter, and be contented, if he should not prove *quite* so good." This Chitchat is to yourself

only, in return for some of yours about your Grandson, and must only be read to Sally, and not spoken of to anybody else; for you know how People add and alter Silly stories that they hear, and make them appear ten times more silly.

The room at the Bishop's home, in which the *Autobiography* was begun, was ever subsequently known as Franklin's room. After his return to America from France, Catherine Louisa Shipley, one of the Bishop's daughters, wrote to him, "We never walk in the garden without seeing Dr. Franklin's room and thinking of the work that was begun in it." In a letter to the Bishop in 1771, Franklin says:

I regret my having been oblig'd to leave that most agreeable Retirement which good Mrs. Shipley put me so kindly in possession of. I now breathe with Reluctance the Smoke of London, when I think of the sweet Air of Twyford. And by the Time your Races are over, or about the Middle of next Month (if it should then not be unsuitable to your Engagements or other Purposes) I promise myself the Happiness of spending another Week or two where I so pleasantly spent the last.

Close behind this letter, went also one of his "books," which he hoped that Miss Georgiana, another daughter of the Bishop, would be good enough to accept as a small mark of his "Regard for her philosophic Genius," and a quantity of American dried apples for Mrs. Shipley. A month later, he writes to the Bishop that he had been prevented from coming to Twyford by business, but that he purposed to set out on the succeeding Tuesday for "that sweet Retreat." How truly sweet it was to him a letter that he subsequently wrote to Georgiana from Passy enables us in some measure to realize. Among other things, it contained these winning and affecting words:

Accept my Thanks for your Friendly Verses and good Wishes. How many Talents you possess! Painting, Poetry,

Languages, etc., etc. All valuable, but your good Heart is worth the whole.

Your mention of the Summer House brings fresh to my mind all the Pleasures I enjoyed in the sweet Retreat at Twyford: the Hours of agreeable and instructive Conversation with the amiable Family at Table; with its Father alone; the delightful Walks in the Gardens and neighbouring Grounds. Pleasures past and gone forever! Since I have had your Father's Picture I am grown more covetous of the rest; every time I look at your second Drawing I have regretted that you have not given to your Juno the Face of Anna Maria, to Venus that of Emily or Betsey, and to Cupid that of Emily's Child, as it would have cost you but little more Trouble. I must, however, beg that you will make me up a compleat Set of your little Profiles, which are more easily done. You formerly obliged me with that of the Father, an excellent one. Let me also have that of the good Mother, and of all the Children. It will help me to fancy myself among you, and to enjoy more perfectly in Idea, the Pleasure of your Society. My little Fellow-Traveller, the sprightly Hetty, with whose sensible Prattle I was so much entertained, why does she not write to me? If Paris affords anything that any of you wish to have, mention it. You will oblige me. It affords everything but *Peace!* Ah! When shall we again enjoy that Blessing.

Previously he had written to Thomas Digges that the portrait of the Bishop mentioned by him had not come to hand; nor had he heard anything of it, and that he was anxious to see it, "having no hope of living to see again the much lov'd and respected original." His request for the little profiles of the Shipleys was complied with, we know, because in a letter to the Bishop some two years afterwards he said: "Your Shades are all plac'd in a Row over my Fireplace, so that I not only have you always in my Mind, but constantly before my Eyes." This letter was written in reply to a letter from the Bishop which was the first to break the long silence that the war between Great Britain and America had imposed

upon the two friends. "After so long a Silence, and the long Continuance of its unfortunate Causes," Franklin began, "a Line from you was a Prognostic of happier Times approaching, when we may converse and communicate freely, without Danger from the Malevolence of Men enrag'd by the ill success of their distracted Projects."

Among the entries in the desultory Journal that Franklin kept of his return from France to America, are these relating to the visit paid him at Southampton by the Bishop: "Wrote a letter to the Bishop of St. Asaph, acquainting him with my arrival, and he came with his lady and daughter, Miss Kitty, after dinner, to see us; they talk of staying here as long as we do. Our meeting was very affectionate." For two or three days, the reunited friends all lodged at the Star, at Southampton, and took their meals together. The day before his ship sailed, Franklin invited the Bishop and his wife and daughter to accompany him on board, and, when he retired, it was with the expectation that they would spend the night on the ship, but, when he awoke the next morning, he found that they had thoughtfully left the ship, after he retired, to relieve the poignancy of the farewell, and that he was off on his westward course.

In his last letter to the Bishop, Franklin expresses his regret that conversation between them at Southampton had been cut short so frequently by third persons, and thanks him for the pleasure that he derived from the copy of Paley's *Moral Philosophy*, given to him by the Bishop there. Along with the usual contradiction of the English and Loyalist view at this time of our national condition, and the usual picture of himself encircled by his grandchildren, he indulges in these striking reflections about the chequered fate of parental expectations:

> He that raises a large Family does, indeed, while he lives to observe them, *stand*, as Watts says, *a broader Mark for Sorrow;*

but then he stands a broader Mark for Pleasure too. When we launch our little Fleet of Barques into the Ocean, bound to different Ports, we hope for each a prosperous Voyage; but contrary Winds, hidden Shoals, Storms, and Enemies come in for a Share in the Disposition of Events; and though these occasion a Mixture of Disappointment, yet, considering the Risque where we can make no Insurance, we should think ourselves happy if some return with Success.

Timed as they were, the force of these reflections were not likely to be lost upon the Bishop. Some years before, Georgiana had married with his bitter disapproval Francis Hare-Naylor, the writer of plays and novels, and author of the *History of the Helvetic Republics*, who was so unfortunate as to be arrested for debt during his courtship, while in the episcopal coach of the Bishop with Georgiana and her parents. After the Bishop refused to recognize the husband, the Duchess of Devonshire settled an annuity of three hundred pounds a year upon the couple, and among the wise, weighty letters of Franklin is one that he wrote from France to Georgiana, after her marriage, in which he replies to her inquiries about the opening that America would afford to a young married couple, and refers to this annuity. The concluding portion of this letter also has its value as another illustration of the calm manner in which Franklin looked forward to his end. He tells Georgiana that, if he should be in America, when they were there, his best counsels and services would not be wanting, and that to see her happily settled and prosperous there would give him infinite pleasure, but that, of course, if he ever arrived there, his stay could be but short.

Franklin survived the Bishop, and his letter to Catherine, in reply to hers, announcing the death of her father, is in his best vein.

That excellent man has then left us! His departure is a loss, not to his family and friends only, but to his nation,

and to the world; for he was intent on doing good, had wisdom to devise the means, and talents to promote them. His "Sermon before the Society for Propagating the Gospel," and his "Speech intended to have been spoken," are proofs of his ability as well as his humanity. Had his counsels in those pieces been attended to by the ministers, how much bloodshed might have been prevented, and how much expense and disgrace to the nation avoided!

Your reflections on the constant calmness and composure attending his death are very sensible. Such instances seem to show, that the good sometimes enjoy in dying a foretaste of the happy state they are about to enter.

According to the course of years, I should have quitted this world long before him. I shall however not be long in following. I am now in my eighty-fourth year, and the last year has considerably enfeebled me; so that I hardly expect to remain another. You will then, my dear friend, consider this as probably the last line to be received from me, and as a taking leave. Present my best and most sincere respects to your good mother, and love to the rest of the family, to whom I wish all happiness; and believe me to be, while I *do* live, yours most affectionately.

His friendship in this instance, as usual, embraced the whole family. In a letter in 1783 to Sir William Jones, the accomplished lawyer and Oriental scholar, who married Anna Maria, one of the Bishop's daughters, he said that he flattered himself that he might in the ensuing summer be able to undertake a trip to England for the pleasure of seeing once more his dear friends there, among whom the Bishop and his family stood foremost in his estimation and affection.

To the Bishop himself he wrote from Passy in the letter which mentioned the shades of the Shipleys above his fireplace: "Four daughters! how rich! I have but one, and she, necessarily detain'd from me at 1000 leagues distance. I feel the Want of that tender Care of me,

which might be expected from a Daughter, and would give the World for one."

And later in this letter he says with the bountiful affection, which made him little less than a member of the families of some of his friends, "Please to make my best Respects acceptable to Mrs. Shipley, and embrace for me tenderly all our dear Children."

At the request of Catherine, he wrote the *Art of Procuring Pleasant Dreams* in which hygiene and the importance of preserving a good conscience are so gracefully blended, and received from her a reply, in which, after declaring that it flattered her exceedingly that he should employ so much of his precious time in complying with her request, she put to him the question, "But where do you read that Methusaleh slept in the open air? I have searched the Bible in vain to find it."

When Sir William Jones was on the eve of being married to Anna Maria, and of sailing away to India, where he was to win so much distinction, Franklin wrote to him the letter already mentioned, joining his blessing on the union with that of the good Bishop, and expressing the hope that the prospective bridegroom might return from that corrupting country with a great deal of money honestly acquired, and with full as much virtue as he carried out.

The affection that he felt for Catherine and Georgiana, his letters to them, from which we have already quoted, sufficiently reveal. Of the four daughters, Georgiana was, perhaps, his favorite, and she is an example with Mary Stevenson of the subtle magnetism that his intellect and nature had for feminine affinities of mind and temperament. It was to Georgiana, when a child, that he wrote his well-known letter containing an epitaph on her squirrel, which had been dispatched by a dog. The letter and epitaph are good enough specimens of his humor to be quoted in full:

DEAR MISS,

I LAMENT with you most sincerely the unfortunate end of poor Mungo. Few squirrels were better accomplished; for he had had a good education, had travelled far, and seen much of the world. As he had the honor of being, for his virtues, your favourite, he should not go, like common skuggs, without an elegy or an epitaph. Let us give him one in the monumental style and measure, which, being neither prose nor verse, is perhaps the properest for grief; since to use common language would look as if we were not affected, and to make rhymes would seem trifling in sorrow.

EPITAPH

Alas! poor Mungo!
Happy wert thou, hadst thou known
Thy own felicity.
Remote from the fierce bald eagle,
Tyrant of thy native woods,
Thou hadst nought to fear from his piercing talons,
Nor from the murdering gun
Of the thoughtless sportsman.
Safe in thy wired castle,
GRIMALKIN never could annoy thee.
Daily wert thou fed with the choicest viands,
By the fair hand of an indulgent mistress;
But, discontented,
Thou wouldst have more freedom.
Too soon, alas! didst thou obtain it;
And wandering,
Thou art fallen by the fangs of wanton, cruel Ranger!
Learn hence,
Ye who blindly seek more liberty,
Whether subjects, sons, squirrels or daughters,
That apparent restraint may be real protection;
Yielding peace and plenty
With security.

You see, my dear Miss, how much more decent and proper this broken style is, than if we were to say, by way of epitaph,

Here SKUGG
Lies snug,
As a bug
In a rug.

and yet, perhaps, there are people in the world of so little feeling as to think that this would be a good-enough epitaph for poor Mungo.

If you wish it, I shall procure another to succeed him; but perhaps you will now choose some other amusement.

Two of Georgiana's letters to Franklin, after his arrival in France, are very interesting, and one of them especially could not have been written by any but a highly gifted and accomplished woman. In this letter, the first of the two, she begins by expressing her joy at unexpectedly receiving a letter from him.

How good you were [she exclaimed] to send me your direction, but I fear I must not make use of it as often as I could wish, since my father says it will be prudent not to write in the present situation of affairs. I am not of an age to be so very prudent, and the only thought that occurred to me was your suspecting that my silence proceeded from other motives. I could not support the idea of your believing that I love and esteem you less than I did some few years ago. I therefore write this once without my father's knowledge. You are the first man that ever received a private letter from me, and in this instance I feel that my intentions justify my conduct; but I must entreat that you will take no notice of my writing, when next I have the happiness of hearing from you.

She then proceeds to tell Franklin all about her father, her mother, her sister Emily and Emily's daughter, "a charming little girl, near fifteen months old, whom her aunts reckon a prodigy of sense and beauty." The rest of her sisters, she said, continued in *statu quo*. Whether

that proceeded from the men being difficult or from *their* being difficult, she left him to determine.

His friends all loved him almost as much as she did; as much she would not admit to be possible. Dr. Pringle had made her extremely happy the preceding winter by giving her a print of her excellent friend, which was certainly very like him, although it wanted the addition of his own hair to make it complete; but, as it was, she prized it infinitely, now that the dear original was absent. She then has a word to say about Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, Gibbon's *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* and the *Economics*, which she had read with great attention, as indeed everything else she could meet with relative to Socrates; for she fancied she could discover in each trait of that admirable man's character a strong resemblance between him and her much-loved friend—the same clearness of judgment, the same uprightness of intention and the same superior understanding. Other words are bestowed on the account which Sir William Hamilton had lately given her of a new electrical machine invented in Italy, the happiness that she would enjoy, if Franklin were in England to explain it to her, and the envy excited in her by the opportunities that his grandson had for showing him kindness and attention. "Did my family," she further declares, "know of my writing, my letter would scarce contain the very many things they would desire me to say for them. They continue to admire and love you as much as they did formerly, nor can any time or event in the least change their sentiments."

She then concludes partly in French and partly in English in these words:

Adieu, mon cher Socrate; conservez-vous pour l'amour de moi, et pour mille autres raisons plus importants. Je ne vous en dirai pas d'advantage pour aujourd'hui, mais je veux

esperer de vous entretenir plus á mon aise, avant que soit longue. Pray write whenever a safe conveyance opens, since the receiving letters is reckoned very different from answering them. I must once more repeat nobody knows of this scroll; "a word to the wise,"—as Poor Richard says.

In her second letter, Georgiana speaks of the difficulty she experienced in having her letters conveyed safely to Passy. "Strange," she declared, "that I should be under the necessity of concealing from the world a correspondence which it is the pride and glory of my heart to maintain." His *Dialogue with the Gout*, she said, was written with his own cheerful pleasantry, and *La belle et la mauvaise Jambe* recalled to her mind those happy hours they once passed in his society, where they were never amused without learning some useful truth, and where she first acquired a taste *pour la conversation badinante and réfléchie.* Her father grew every year fonder of the peace of Twyford; having found his endeavors to serve his country ineffectual, he had yielded to a torrent which it was no longer in his power to control. Sir John Pringle (Franklin's friend) had left London and gone to reside in Scotland; she feared that he was much straitened in his circumstances; he looked ill and was vastly changed from what he remembered him; Dr. Priestley (another friend of Franklin) was then on a short visit to his friends in town; good Dr. Price (another friend of Franklin) called on them often, and gave them hopes of a visit to Twyford.

The letter also informed Franklin that the first opportunity that they had of sending a parcel to Paris he might expect *all* their shades; and expressed her gratitude to Mr. Jones for undertaking the care of her letter, and giving her an opportunity of assuring Franklin how much she did and ever should continue to love him.

Catherine Ray was not far wrong when she spoke of Franklin as a conjurer. Catherine Shipley's letter to him, after she had parted with him at Southampton,

though without the romantic flush of these two letters, spoke the same general language of deep-seated affection. She was quite provoked with herself, she said, when she got to Southampton that she had not thought of something, such as a pincushion, to leave with him, that might have been useful to him during the voyage to remind him of her. "Did you ever taste the ginger cake," she asked, "and think it had belonged to your fellow-traveller? In short, I want some excuse for asking whether you ever think about me." And from this letter it appears that he had a place in the hearts of Emily and Betsey too. She had had a letter from Emily, Catherine further said, the night after she got home, to inquire whether his stay at Southampton would allow time for her coming to see him. Betsey regretted much that she had lost that happiness, and the writer had written to dear Georgiana a long account of him, for she knew every circumstance would be interesting to her. "Indeed, my dear sir," the letter ended, "from my father and mother down to their *youngest child*, we all respect and love you."[1]

When Franklin was told by Georgiana that Sir John Pringle was pinched by poverty, and looked ill, he must have been sorely distressed; for Sir John he once described as his "steady, good friend." A pupil of Boerhaave, a high authority upon the application of sanitary science to the prevention of dysentery and hospital fevers, physician to the Queen, and President of the Royal Society, Dr. Pringle was one of the distinguished men of his time. What churchmen were to the preservation of classical learning, before teaching became a special calling, physicians were to general scientific knowledge before science became such; and, among these physicians, he occupied an honorable position.[2] "His speech in

[1] "Mrs. Shipley and her daughter Kitty, in their passion for you rival Georgiana." Letter from Jonathan Shipley to Franklin, Nov. 27, 1785.

[2] To a series of experiments, conducted by Sir John Pringle, we owe

giving the last medal, (of the Royal Society) on the subject of the discoveries relating to the air," Franklin wrote to Jan Ingenhousz, "did him great honour." He was quite unlike the courtiers who sought to convince King Canute that he could stay the incoming tide by his command, as George III. found out when he asked him, after the outbreak of the American Revolution, to pronounce an opinion in favor of the substitution of blunt for pointed lightning rods on Kew Palace. The laws of nature, Sir John hinted, were not changeable at royal pleasure, but positions of honor and profit he soon learnt, if he did not know it before, were; for he fell into such disfavor with the King that he had to resign as President of the Royal Society, and was deprived of his post as physician to the Queen. The circumstances in which his disgrace originated leave us at but little loss to understand why the King should have become such a dogged partisan of blunt conductors. Prior to the Revolution, Franklin had been consulted by the British Board of Ordnance as to the best means of protecting the arsenals at Purfleet from lightning, and, after he had visited the powder magazine there, the Royal Society, too, was asked by the Board for its opinion. The Society accordingly appointed a committee of learned men, including Cavendish and Franklin, to make a report on the subject. All of the committee except Benjamin Wilson, who dissented, reported in favor of pointed conductors as against blunt ones, and Franklin, the inventor of pointed lightning rods, drew up the report. The scientific controversy that followed soon assumed a political character, when Franklin dropped the philosophical task of snatching the lightning from the skies for the rebellious task of

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our knowledge of the fact that mosquito hawks are so whimsically constituted that they live longer with their heads off than on. One of these decapitated moths was so tenacious of his existence as to survive for 174 days.

snatching the sceptre from a tyrant. When he heard that George III. was, like Ajax, obstinate enough to defy even the lightning, he wrote to an unknown correspondent:

> The King's changing his *pointed* conductors for *blunt* ones is, therefore, a matter of small importance to me. If I had a wish about it, it would be that he had rejected them altogether as ineffectual. For it is only since he thought himself and family safe from the thunder of Heaven, that he dared to use his own thunder in destroying his innocent subjects.

Dr. Ingenhousz, however, was not so self-contained, and made such an angry attack on Wilson that Franklin, who invariably relied in such cases upon silence and the principle that Truth is a cat with nine lives to defend him, laughingly remarked, "He seems as much heated about this *one point*, as the Jansenists and Molinists were about the *five*." As for King George, he had at least the satisfaction of realizing that his people still had a ready fund of wit for timely use. One homely couplet of the period, referring to Franklin's famous kite, ran in this way:

> "He with a kite drew lightning from the sky,
> And like a kite he pecked King George's eye."

Another more polished poet penned these neat lines:

> "While you, great George, for knowledge hunt,
> And sharp conductors change for blunt,
> The Empire's out of joint.
> Franklin another course pursues
> And all your thunder heedless views
> By keeping to the point."

If we may believe Franklin, Sir John held the efficacy of the healing art in very moderate esteem. The reader has already been told of the humorous manner in which

he let it be known that, in his opinion, of the two classes of practitioners, old women and regular physicians, the former had done the most to save the honor of the profession. Franklin also informed Dr. Rush that Sir John "once told him 92 fevers out of 100 cured themselves, 4 were cured by Art, and 4 proved fatal." But many people must have had a more favorable opinion of the professional value of Sir John than Sir John himself had, for his "Conversations" were in high repute. On this point, there is some evidence in a letter from Franklin to Dr. Thomas Bond, who was desirous of giving his son Richard the benefit of a foreign medical education. Referring to Sir John, Franklin wrote:

> Every Wednesday Evening he admits young Physicians and Surgeons to a Conversation at his House, which is thought very improving to them. I will endeavour to introduce your Son there when he comes to London. And to tell you frankly my Opinion, I suspect there is more valuable knowledge in Physic to be learnt from the honest candid Observations of an old Practitioner, who is past all desire of more Business, having made his Fortune, who has none of the Professional Interest in keeping up a Parade of Science to draw Pupils, and who by Experience has discovered the Inefficacy of most Remedies and Modes of Practice, than from all the formal Lectures of all the Universities upon Earth.

That Sir John cured at least one patient, we are told by Dr. Rush on the authority of Franklin, but it was only himself of a tremor, and that by simply ceasing to take snuff. Dr. Pringle and himself, Franklin told Dr. Rush, observed that tremors of the hands were more frequent in France than elsewhere, and probably from the excessive use of snuff. "He concluded," says Dr. Rush, "that there was no great advantage in using tobacco in any way, for that he had kept company with persons who used it all his life, and no one had ever advised him to use it. The

Doctor in the 81st year of his age declared he had never snuffed, chewed, or smoked."

Among the persons who sought Sir John's professional advice was Franklin himself. It was in relation to a cutaneous trouble which vexed him for some fourteen years, and broke out afresh when he was in his eighty-third year. But the best medicine that Franklin ever obtained from Sir John was his companionship upon two continental tours, one of which was inspired by the latter's desire to drink the waters at Pyrmont, and the other by the attractions of the French capital. When the news of Sir John's death reached Franklin at Passy he paid the usual heartfelt tribute. "We have lost our common Friend," he wrote to Jan Ingenhousz, "the excellent Pringle. How many pleasing hours you and I have pass'd together in his Company!"

Another English physician, for whom Franklin entertained a feeling of deep affection, was the Quaker Dr. John Fothergill. After the death of this friend, in a letter to Dr. John Coakley Lettsom, still another friend of his, and one of the famous English physicians of the eighteenth century, he expressed this extraordinary opinion of Dr. Fothergill's worth: "If we may estimate the goodness of a man by his disposition to do good, and his constant endeavours and success in doing it, I can hardly conceive that a better man has ever existed." No faint praise to be uttered by the founder of the Junto and one who valued above all things the character of a doer of good! Like Sir John Pringle, Dr. Fothergill belonged to the class of physicians who pursued medicine, as if it were a mistress not to be wooed except with the favor of the other members of the scientific sisterhood. He was an ardent botanist, and his collection of botanical specimens and paintings on vellum of rare plants was among the remarkable collections of his age. Two of his correspondents were the Pennsylvania botanists, John Bartram and Humphrey

Marshall, who brought to his knowledge a flora in many shining instances unknown to the woods and fields of the Old World. His medical writings were held in high esteem, and were published after his death under the editorial supervision of Dr. Lettsom.

As a practitioner, he was eminently successful, and numbered among his patients many representatives of the most powerful and exclusive circles in London. What the extent of his practice was we can infer from a question put to him by Franklin in 1764.

> By the way [he asked], when do you intend to live?—*i. e.*, to enjoy life. When will you retire to your villa, give yourself repose, delight in viewing the operations of nature in the vegetable creation, assist her in her works, get your ingenious friends at times about you, make them happy with your conversation, and enjoy theirs: or, if alone, amuse yourself with your books and elegant collections?
>
> To be hurried about perpetually from one sick chamber to another is not living. Do you please yourself with the fancy that you are doing good? You are mistaken. Half the lives you save are not worth saving, as being useless, and almost all the other half ought not to be saved, as being mischievous. Does your conscience never hint to you the impiety of being in constant warfare against the plans of Providence? Disease was intended as the punishment of intemperance, sloth, and other vices, and the example of that punishment was intended to promote and strengthen the opposite virtues.

All of which, of course, except the suggestion about retirement, which was quite in keeping with Franklin's conception of a rational life, was nothing more than humorous paradox on the part of a man who loved all his fellow-creatures too much to despair of any of them.

When Franklin himself was seized with a grave attack of illness shortly after his arrival in England on his first mission, Doctor Fothergill was his physician, and seems

to have cupped and physicked him with drastic assiduity. The patient was not a very docile one, for he wrote to Deborah that, too soon thinking himself well, he ventured out twice, and both times got fresh cold, and fell down again; and that his "good doctor" grew very angry with him for acting contrary to his cautions and directions, and obliged him to promise more observance for the future. Always to Franklin the Doctor remained the "good Doctor Fothergill." Even in a codicil to his will, in bequeathing to one of his friends the silver cream pot given to him by the doctor, with the motto "Keep bright the chain," he refers to him by that designation.

Nor were his obligations as a patient the only obligations that Franklin owed to this friend. When his early letters on electricity were sent over to England, only to be laughed at in the first instance, they happened to pass under the eye of the Doctor. He saw their merit, advised their publication, and wrote the preface to the pamphlet in which they were published by Cave. But the things for which Franklin valued the Doctor most were his public spirit and philanthropy. He was well known in Philadelphia, and, when Franklin arrived in London in 1757, he was actively assisted by the Doctor in his effort to secure a settlement of the dispute over taxation between the Pennsylvania Assembly and the Proprietaries. Afterwards, when Franklin's second mission to England was coming to an end, the Doctor was drawn deeply into a vain attempt made by Lord Howe and his sister and David Barclay, another Quaker friend of Franklin, to compose the American controversy by an agreement with Franklin. For this business, among other reasons, because of "his daily Visits among the Great, in the Practice of his Profession," of which Franklin speaks in his history of these negotiations, he would have been a most helpful ally; if the quarrel had not become so embittered. But, as it was, the knot, which

the negotiators were striving to disentangle, was too intricate for anything but the edge of the sword. When the negotiations came to nothing, the good Doctor, who knew the sentiments of "the Great" in London at that time, if any private person did, had no advice to give to Franklin except, when he returned to America, to get certain of the Doctor's friends in Philadelphia, and two or three other persons together, and to inform them that, whatever specious pretences were offered by the English ministry, they were all hollow, and that to obtain a larger field, on which to fatten a herd of worthless parasites, was all that was regarded. It was a bad day, indeed, for England when one of the best men in the land could hold such language.

The silk experiment in Pennsylvania furnished still another congenial field for the co-operation of Franklin and Doctor Fothergill; and, in a letter to Franklin, the latter also declared in startlingly modern terms that, in the warmth of his affection for mankind, he could wish to see "the institution of a College of Justice, where the claims of sovereigns should be weighed, an award given, and war only made on him who refused submission."

"Dr. Fothergill, who was among the best men I have known, and a great promoter of useful projects," is the way in which Franklin alludes to the Doctor in the *Autobiography*. He then states in the same connection the plan that he submitted to the Doctor for "the more effectual cleaning and keeping clean the streets of London and Westminster"; but this plan, though not unworthy of the public zeal and ingenuity of its author, is too embryonic, when contrasted with modern municipal methods, and too tamely suggestive of the broom and dust-pan of ordinary domestic housekeeping, to deserve detailed attention.

Franklin was eminently what Dr. Johnson called a "clubable" man. When in England, he often dined at

the London Coffee House in Ludgate Hill with the group of scientific men and liberal clergymen, who frequented the place, and of whom he spoke on one occasion as "that excellent Collection of good Men, the Club at the *London*." He also sometimes dined at St. Paul's Coffee House and the Dog Tavern on Garlick Hill, and with the Society of Friends to the Cause of Liberty at Paul's Head Tavern, Cateaton Street, where, upon every 4th day of November, the landing of King William and the Glorious Revolution were enthusiastically toasted. When he ate or drank at a club, he liked to do so in an atmosphere of free thought and free speech. Religion, spiced with heresy, and Politics flavored with liberalism, were the kinds of religion and politics that best suited his predilections. It was at St. Paul's Coffee House that he became acquainted with Dr. Richard Price, the celebrated clergyman and economist, who was then preaching every Sunday afternoon at Newington Green, where Franklin advised Sir John Pringle to go to hear in the Doctor a preacher of *rational* Christianity. It is probable that Sir John, in inquiring of Franklin where he could go to hear such a preacher, was moved rather by curiosity than piety; for Franklin wrote to Dr. Price: "At present I believe he has no view of attending constantly anywhere, but now and then only as it may suit his convenience."

The acquaintance between Franklin and Doctor Price, once formed, became a deeply-rooted friendship, and on Franklin's part it was accompanied by a degree of admiration for the Doctor's abilities which hurried him on one occasion into language that had little in common with the sober language in which his judgments were usually pronounced. Of Doctor Price's *Appeal to the Public on the Subject of the National Debt*, he wrote to the author in the most enthusiastic terms, "it being in my Opinion," he said, "consider[s] the profound Study, &

steady Application of Mind that the Work required, & the sound Judgment with which it is executed, and its great and important Utility to the Nation, the foremost Production of human Understanding, that this Century has afforded us." And to Franklin on one occasion this friend wrote that he considered his friendship one of the honors and blessings of his life.

When the American controversy arose, Dr. Price zealously espoused the cause of the Colonies, and this still further strengthened the friendship between the two. For his *Observations on Civil Liberty and the Justice and Policy of the War with America*, the City of London presented him with the freedom of the city in a gold box of fifty pounds value; and so outspoken was he in the expression of his political convictions that Franklin wrote to John Winthrop in 1777 that "his Friends, on his Acc^{t}, were under some Apprehensions from the Violence of Government, in consequence of his late excellent Publications in favour of Liberty." Indeed, so near was he to making the American cause absolutely his own that Congress, while the American War was still raging, even invited him to become an American citizen and to assist in regulating the American finances, but that was one step further than he was willing to go. In a letter to Joseph Priestley, shortly after the Battle of Bunker's Hill, Franklin makes an amusing allusion to the mathematical genius of Dr. Price which was equal to the abstrusest problems involved in the calculation of annuities.

> Britain [he said], at the expense of three millions, has killed one hundred and fifty Yankees this campaign, which is twenty thousand pounds a head; and at Bunker's Hill she gained a mile of ground, half of which she lost again by our taking post on Ploughed Hill. During the same time sixty thousand children have been born in America. From these *data* his (Dr. Price's) mathematical head will easily calculate

the time and expense necessary to kill us all, and conquer our whole territory.

Always in the American controversy, Franklin relied upon the loins as well as the hands of the Colonists for the final victory.

While mentioning Priestley, we might recall the compliment in a letter from Franklin to Dr. Price, in which the former brought the names of Priestley and Price into a highly honorable conjunction. Speaking of dissensions in the Royal Society, he said, "Disputes even on small Matters often produce Quarrels for want of knowing how to differ decently; an Art which it is said scarce anybody possesses but yourself and Dr. Priestley." Dr. Price was one of the habitués of the London Coffee House, and, in Franklin's letters to him from Passy, there are repeated references to the happy hours that the writer had spent there. "I never think of the Hours I so happily spent in that Company," he said in one letter, "without regretting that they are never to be repeated: For I see no Prospect of an End to the unhappy War in my Time." In another letter, he concluded with a heartfelt wish that he might embrace Dr. Price once more, and enjoy his sweet society in peace among his honest, worthy, ingenious friends at the *London*. In another letter, after peace was assured, he said that he longed to see and be merry with the Club, and, in a still later letter, he told Dr. Price that he might "pop" in some Thursday evening when they least expected him. In enclosing, on one occasion, to Dr. Price a copy of his Rabelaisian *jeu d'esprit* on "Perfumes," which was intended also for the eye of Priestley, Franklin cracks an obscene joke at the expense of Priestley's famous researches with regard to gases, but, when Dr. Price states in his reply, "We have been entertained with the pleasantry of it, and the ridicule it contains," we are again reminded that the eighteenth century was not the twentieth.

Dr. Price was one of the correspondents to whom Franklin expounded his theory that England's only chance for self-reformation was to render all places unprofitable and the King too poor to give bribes and pensions.

Till this is done [he said], which can only be by a Revolution (and I think you have not Virtue enough left to procure one), your Nation will always be plundered, and obliged to pay by Taxes the Plunderers for Plundering and Ruining. Liberty and Virtue therefore join in the call, *COME OUT OF HER, MY PEOPLE!*

In a later letter, he returns to the same subject in these words so pregnant with meaning for a student of the political conditions which palsied the influence of Chatham and Burke in their effort to avert the American War:

As it seems to be a settled Point at present, that the Minister must govern the Parliament, who are to do everything he would have done; and he is to bribe them to do this, and the People are to furnish the Money to pay these Bribes; the Parliament appears to me a very expensive Machine for Government, and I apprehend the People will find out in time, that they may as well be governed, and that it will be much cheaper to be governed, by the Minister alone; no Parliament being preferable to the present.

There are also some thoughtful observations in one of Franklin's letters to Dr. Price on the limited influence of Roman and Grecian oratory, as compared with the influence of the modern newspaper. "We now find," he observed, "that it is not only right to strike while the iron is hot, but that it may be very practicable to heat it by continually striking."

His last letter to Dr. Price was written less than a year before his own death. It refers to the death of the Bishop

of St. Asaph's, and once more there is a mournful sigh from the Tree of Existence.

My Friends drop off one after another, when my Age and Infirmities prevent my making new Ones [he groaned], & if I still retained the necessary Activity and Ability, I hardly see among the existing Generation where I could make them of equal Goodness: So that the longer I live I must expect to be very wretched. As we draw nearer the Conclusion of Life, Nature furnishes with more Helps to wean us from it, among which one of the most powerful is the Loss of such dear Friends.

With Dr. Joseph Priestley, the famous clergyman and natural philosopher, Franklin was very intimate. The discoveries of Priestley, especially his discovery that carbonic acid gas is imbibed by vegetation, awakened Franklin's keenest interest, and, some years before Priestley actually received a medal from the Royal Society for his scientific achievements, Franklin earnestly, though vainly, endeavored to obtain one for him. "I find that you have set all the Philosophers of Europe at Work upon Fix'd Air," he said in one of his letters to Priestley, "and it is with great Pleasure I observe how high you stand in their Opinion; for I enjoy my Friend's fame as my own." And no one who knows his freedom from all petty, carking feelings of every sort, such as envy and jealousy, can doubt for a moment that he did. For a time, fixed air aroused so much speculation that it was thought that it might even be a remedy for putrid fevers and cancers. The absorption of carbonic acid gas by vegetation is all simple enough now, but it was not so simple when Priestley wrote to Franklin that he had discovered that even aquatic plants imbibe pure air, and emit it as excrementitious to them, in a dephlogisticated state. On one occasion, Franklin paid his fellow-philosopher the compliment of saying that he knew of no

philosopher who started so much good game for the hunters after knowledge as he did.

For a time Priestley enjoyed the patronage of Lord Shelburne, who, desirous of having the company of a man of general learning to read with him, and superintend the education of his children, took Priestley from his congregation at Leeds, settled three hundred pounds a year upon him for ten years, and two hundred pounds for life, with a house to live in near his country seat. So Franklin stated in a letter to John Winthrop, when Priestley was engaged in the task of putting Lord Shelburne's great library into order. Subsequently patron and client separated amicably, but, before they did, Priestley consulted Franklin as to whether he should go on with the arrangement. The latter in a few judicious sentences counselled him to do so until the end of the term of ten years, and, by way of illustrating the frequent and troublesome changes, that human beings make without amendment, and often for the worse, told this story of his youth:

In my Youth, I was a Passenger in a little Sloop, descending the River Delaware. There being no Wind, we were obliged, when the Ebb was spent, to cast anchor, and wait for the next. The Heat of the Sun on the Vessel was excessive, the Company Strangers to me, and not very agreeable. Near the river Side I saw what I took to be a pleasant green Meadow, in the middle of which was a large shady Tree, where it struck my Fancy I could sit and read, (having a Book in my Pocket,) and pass the time agreeably till the tide turned. I therefore prevail'd with the Captain to put me ashore. Being landed, I found the greatest part of my Meadow was really a Marsh, in crossing which, to come at my Tree, I was up to my knees in Mire; and I had not placed myself under its Shade five Minutes, before the Muskitoes in Swarms found me out, attack'd my Legs, Hands, and Face, and made my Reading and my Rest impossible; so that I return'd to the Beach, and

call'd for the Boat to come and take me aboard again, where I was oblig'd to bear the Heat I had strove to quit, and also the Laugh of the Company. Similar Cases in the Affairs of Life have since frequently fallen under my Observation.

Deterrent as was the advice, pointed by such a graphic story, Priestley did not take it, and, fortunately for him, the pleasant green meadow and large shady tree to which he retired did not prove such a deceptive mirage. After the separation, Lord Shelburne endeavored to induce him to renew their former relation, but he declined.

Priestley was one of the witnesses of the baiting, to which Franklin was subjected at the Cockpit, on account of the Hutchinson letters, on the famous occasion, of which it could be well said by every thoughtful Englishman a little later in the words of the ballad of Chevy-Chase,

> "The child may rue that is unborne
> The hunting of that day."

Or "the speaking" of that day, as Lord Campbell has parodied the lines.

Priestley was also among those eye-witnesses of the scene, who testified to the absolutely impassive countenance with which Franklin bore the ordeal. As he left the room, however, he pressed Priestley's hand in a way that indicated much feeling. The next day, they breakfasted together, and Franklin told Priestley "that, if he had not considered the thing for which he had been so much insulted, as one of the best actions of his life, and what he should certainly do again in the same circumstances, he could not have supported it."

To Priestley also the world was first indebted for knowledge of the fact that, when Franklin afterwards came to sign in France the Treaty of Alliance between that country and the United States, he took pains to wear the

same suit of spotted Manchester velvet that he wore when he was treated with such indecency at the Cockpit.

From France Franklin wrote to Priestley a letter expressing the horror—for no other term is strong enough to describe the sentiment—in which he held the unnatural war between Great Britain and her revolted Colonies.

> The Hint you gave me jocularly [he said], that you did not quite despair of the Philosopher's Stone, draws from me a Request, that, when you have found it, you will take care to lose it again; for I believe in my conscience, that Mankind are wicked enough to continue slaughtering one another as long as they can find Money to pay the Butchers. But, of all the Wars in my time, this on the part of England appears to me the wickedest; having no Cause but Malice against Liberty, and the Jealousy of Commerce. And I think the Crime seems likely to meet with its proper Punishment; a total loss of her own Liberty, and the Destruction of her own Commerce.

But Franklin was not too incensed to have his joke in this same letter over even such a grim subject for merriment as powder. "When I was at the camp before Boston," he declared, "the Army had not 5 Rounds of Powder a Man. This was kept a Secret even from our People. The World wonder'd that we so seldom fir'd a Cannon; we could not afford it."

Another English friend of Franklin was Benjamin Vaughan, the son of a West Indian planter, and at one time the private secretary of Lord Shelburne. His family was connected with the House of Bedford, and his wife, Sarah Manning, was an aunt of the late Cardinal Manning. To Vaughan the reputation of Franklin is doubly indebted. In 1779, he brought out a new edition of Franklin's writings, and it was partly the entreaties of Abel James and himself which induced Franklin to continue the *Autobiography*, after work on it had been long suspended by its author because of the demands of the Revolution

on his time. The spirit, in which the edition of Franklin's writings was prepared, found expression in the preface. "Can *Englishmen*," Vaughan asked, "read these things and not sigh at reflecting that the *country* which could produce their author, was once without controversy *their own!*"

Before Franklin left France he longed to pay another visit to England, and this matter is touched upon in a letter to Vaughan which sheds a sidelight upon the intimacy which existed between the two men.

> By my doubts of the propriety of my going soon to London, [he said], I meant no reflection on my friends or yours. If I had any call there besides the pleasure of seeing those whom I love, I should have no doubts. If I live to arrive there, I shall certainly embrace your kind invitation, and take up my abode with you.

Some of the sagest observations ever made by Franklin are found in his letters to Vaughan, and several of his happy stories. The following reflections, prompted by English restraints upon commerce, were not intended to be taken literally, but they contain profound insight enough to merit transcription.

> It is wonderful how preposterously the affairs of this world are managed. Naturally one would imagine, that the interest of a few individuals should give way to general interest; but individuals manage their affairs with so much more application, industry, and address, than the public do theirs, that general interest most commonly gives way to particular. We assemble parliaments and councils, to have the benefit of their collected wisdom, but we necessarily have, at the same time, the inconvenience of their collected passions, prejudices, and private interests. By the help of these, artful men overpower their wisdom, and dupe its possessors; and if we may judge by the acts, *arrêts*, and edicts, all the world over, for

regulating commerce, an assembly of great men is the greatest fool upon earth.

When Franklin sat down to write this letter, Vaughan had asked him what remedy he had for the growing luxury of his country which gave so much offence to all English travellers without exception. In replying to this rather tactless question, Franklin's pen ran on until he had completed not so much a letter as an economic essay.

Our People [he begins] are hospitable, and have indeed too much Pride in displaying upon their Tables before Strangers the Plenty and Variety that our Country affords. They have the Vanity, too, of sometimes borrowing one another's Plate to entertain more splendidly. Strangers being invited from House to House, and meeting every Day with a Feast, imagine what they see is the ordinary Way of living of all the Families where they dine; when perhaps each Family lives a Week after upon the Remains of the Dinner given. It is, I own, a Folly in our People to give *such Offence* to *English Travellers*. The first part of the Proverb is thereby verified, that *Fools make Feasts*. I wish in this Case the other were as true, *and Wise Men eat them*. These Travellers might, one would think, find some Fault they could more decently reproach us with, than that of our excessive Civility to them as Strangers.

With this introduction, he proceeds to say a good word for luxury. "Is not the Hope of one day being able to purchase and enjoy Luxuries a great Spur to Labour and Industry?" he asked. And this question brought up one of the inevitable stories.

The Skipper of a Shallop, employed between Cape May and Philadelphia, had done us some small Service, for which he refused Pay. My Wife, understanding that he had a Daughter sent her as a Present a new-fashioned Cap. Three Years After, this Skipper being at my House with an old Farmer of Cape May, his Passenger, he mentioned the Cap, and how

much his Daughter had been pleased with it. "But," says he, "it proved a dear Cap to our Congregation." "How so?" "When my Daughter appeared in it at Meeting, it was so much admired, that all the Girls resolved to get such Caps from Philadelphia, and my Wife and I computed, that the whole could not have cost less than a hundred Pound." "True," says the Farmer, "but you do not tell all the Story. I think the Cap was nevertheless an Advantage to us, for it was the first thing that put our Girls upon Knitting worsted Mittens for Sale at Philadelphia, that they might have wherewithal to buy Caps and Ribbands there, and you know that that Industry has continued, and is likely to continue and increase to a much greater Value, and answer better Purposes." Upon the whole, I was more reconciled to this little Piece of Luxury, since not only the Girls were made happier by having fine Caps, but the Philadelphians by the Supply of warm Mittens.

Then he argues still further as follows that luxury may not always be such an evil as it seems:

A Shilling spent idly by a Fool, may be picked up by a Wiser Person, who knows better what to do with it. It is therefore not lost. A vain, silly Fellow builds a fine House, furnishes it richly, lives in it expensively, and in few years ruins himself; but the Masons, Carpenters, Smiths, and other honest Tradesmen have been by his Employ assisted in maintaining and raising their Families; the Farmer has been paid for his labour, and encouraged, and the Estate is now in better Hands.

There were exceptional cases, of course. "If there be a Nation, for Instance, that exports its Beef and Linnen, to pay for its Importation of Claret and Porter, while a great Part of its People live upon Potatoes, and wear no Shirts, wherein does it differ from the Sot, who lets his Family starve, and sells his Clothes to buy Drink." He meant Ireland, it is needless to add. A little in this

way, he confessed, was the exchange of American victuals for West Indian rum and sugar.

The existence of so much want and misery in the world, he thought, was due to the employment of men and women in works that produce neither the necessaries nor the conveniences of life. Such people, aided by those who do nothing, consume the necessaries raised by the laborious. This idea, he developed with his inborn lucidity, ending, however, of course, with the reflection that we should naturally expect from a man, who was so thoroughly in touch with his kind, that, upon the whole, the quantity of industry and prudence among mankind exceeded the quantity of idleness and folly.

This "long, rambling Letter" he called it—this "brief, pointed and masterly letter," we term it—concludes quite in the style of one of Poor Richard's dissertations:

> Almost all the Parts of our Bodies require some Expence. The Feet demand Shoes; the Legs, Stockings; the rest of the Body, Clothing; and the Belly, a good deal of Victuals. *Our* Eyes, tho' exceedingly useful, ask, when reasonable, only the cheap Assistance of Spectacles, which could not much impair our Finances. But *the Eyes of other People* are the Eyes that ruin us. If all but myself were blind, I should want neither fine Clothes, fine Houses, nor fine Furniture.

Another letter to Vaughan is really an essay on the Criminal Laws and the practice of privateering. And a wise, humane and sprightly essay it is, fully worthy of a man, who was entirely too far in advance of his age to approve the savage English laws, which hanged a thief for stealing a horse, and had no better answer to make to the culprit, when he pleaded that it was hard to hang a man for *only* stealing a horse, than the reply of Judge Burnet: "Man, thou art not to be hanged *only* for stealing, but that horses may not be stolen." Not unworthy either was this essay of a man whose benevo-

lence was too clear-sighted and generous to be cheated by the pretence that the practice of privateering has its root in anything better than the rapacity of the highwayman. A highwayman, he said, was as much a robber, when he plundered in a gang, as when single; and a nation, that made an unjust war, was only a great gang. How could England, which had commissioned no less than seven hundred gangs of privateering robbers, he asked, have the face to condemn the crime of robbery in individuals, and hang up twenty criminals in a morning. It naturally put one in mind of a Newgate anecdote. "One of the Prisoners complain'd, that in the Night somebody had taken his Buckles out of his Shoes; 'What, the Devil!' says another, 'have we then *Thieves* among us? It must not be suffered, let us search out the Rogue, and pump him to death."

Vaughan was a prolix correspondent, and in reading his letters we cannot but be reminded at times of the question put to him by Franklin, when inveighing against the artifices adopted by booksellers for the purpose of padding books. After remarking that they were puffed up to such an extent that the selling of paper seemed the object, and printing on it, only the pretence, he said, "You have a law, I think, against butchers blowing of veal to make it look fatter; why not one against booksellers' blowing of books to make them look bigger."

Vaughan was among the friends who did not fail to hasten to Southampton when Franklin touched there on his return from France to America.

In what affectionate esteem Franklin held his two English friends, Dr. John Hawkesworth, the author and writer of oratorios, and John Stanley, the blind musician and organist of the Society of the Inner Temple, we have already seen. Stanley composed the music for Dr. Hawkesworth's oratorios *Zimri* and *The Fall of Egypt*, and like music and words the two friends themselves were

blended in the mind of Franklin. Writing in the latter years of his life to another English friend of his, Thomas Jordan, the brewer, who had recently sent him a cask of porter, he had this to say about them, in connection with the two satellites of Georgium Sidus, which Herschel had just discovered.

> Let us hope, my friend, that, when free from these bodily embarrassments, we may roam together through some of the systems he has explored, conducted by some of our old companions already acquainted with them. Hawkesworth will enliven our progress with his cheerful, sensible converse, and Stanley accompany the music of the spheres.

Several times, in his letter, Franklin refers to Hawkesworth as the "good Doctor Hawkesworth," and it was from him that he learned to call Strahan "Straney."

Another English friend of Franklin was John Sargent, a London merchant, a director of the Bank of England, and a member of Parliament. The friendship was shared by Mrs. Sargent, "whom I love very much," Franklin said in one of his letters to her husband. After his return from his second mission to England, he wrote to Sargent, asking him to receive the balance due him by Messrs. Browns and Collinson, and keep it for him or his children. "It may possibly," he declared, "soon be all I shall have left: as my American Property consists chiefly of Houses in our Seaport Towns, which your Ministry have begun to burn, and I suppose are wicked enough to burn them all." In connection with Sargent, it may also be mentioned that he was one of the applicants with Franklin for the Ohio grant, and that it was at his country seat at Halstead, in Kent, that Lord Stanhope called for the purpose of taking Franklin to Hayes, the country seat of Chatham, where Chatham and Franklin met for the first time.

Another English friend of Franklin was John Canton,

who was, however, rather a scientific than a social comrade, though a fellow-tourist of his on one of his summer excursions; and still another was Dr. Alexander Small, for whom he cherished a feeling of real personal affection. In one letter to Small, he tells him that he had found relief from the gout by exposing his naked foot, when he was in bed, and thereby promoting the process of transpiration. He gave the fact, he said, to Small, in exchange for his receipt for tartar emetic, because the commerce of philosophy as well as other commerce was best promoted by taking care to make returns. In another letter to Small, there is a growl for the American Loyalists.

As to the Refugees [he observed], whom you think we were so impolitic in rejecting, I do not find that they are miss'd here, or that anybody regrets their Absence. And certainly they must be happier where they are, under the Government they admire; and be better receiv'd among a People, whose Cause they espous'd and fought for, than among those who cannot so soon have forgotten the Destruction of their Habitations, and the spilt Blood of their dearest Friends and near Relations.

Then there is a reference in this letter to the learned and ingenious friends, who had left Dr. Small and himself to join the majority in the world of spirits.

Every one of them [he said] now knows more than all of us they have left behind. It is to me a comfortable Reflection, that, since we must live forever in a future State, there is a sufficient Stock of Amusement in reserve for us, to be found in constantly learning something new to Eternity, the present Quantity of human Ignorance infinitely exceeding that of human Knowledge. Adieu, my dear Friend, and believe me, in whatever World, yours most affectionately.

In a subsequent letter, there is a softer word for the Loyalists. He believed, he said, that fear and error

rather than malice occasioned their desertion of their country's cause and the adoption of the King's. The public resentment against them was then so far abated that none, who asked leave to return, were refused, and many of them then lived in America much at their ease. But he thought that the politicians, who were a sort of people that loved to fortify themselves in their projects by precedent, were perhaps waiting, before they ventured to propose the restoration of the confiscated estates of the Loyalists, to see whether the English Government would restore the forfeited estates in Scotland to the Scotch, those in Ireland to the Irish and those in England to the Welsh! He was glad that the Loyalists, who had not returned to America, had received, or were likely to receive, some compensation for their losses from England, but it did not seem so clearly consistent with the wisdom of Parliament for it to provide such compensation on behalf of the King, who had seduced these Loyalists by his proclamations. Some mad King, in the future, might set up such action on the part of Parliament as a precedent, as was realized by the Council of Brutes in the old fable, a copy of which he enclosed. The fable, of course, was not an old fable at all, but one of his own productions, in which the horse with the "boldness and freedom that became the nobleness of his nature," succeeded in convincing the council of the beasts, against the views of the wolves and foxes, that the lion should bestow no reward upon the mongrels, who, sprung in part from wolves and foxes, and corrupted by royal promises of great rewards, had deserted the honest dogs, when the lion, notwithstanding the attachment of these dogs to him, had, under the influence of evil counsellors, contracted an aversion to them, condemned them unheard and ordered his tigers, leopards and panthers to attack and destroy them. In this letter, there is another reference to the reformed prayer-book which Dr. Small

and good Mrs. Baldwin had done him the honor, as we have seen, to approve. The things of this world, he said, took up too much of the little time left to him for him to undertake anything like a reformation in matters of religion. When we can sow good seed, we should, however, do it, and await with patience, when we can do no better, Nature's time for their sprouting.

A later letter assured Dr. Small that Franklin still loved England, and wished it prosperity, but it had only another growl for the Loyalists. Someone had said, he declared, that we are commanded to forgive our enemies, but that we are nowhere commanded to forgive our friends. The Loyalists, after uniting with the savages for the purpose of burning the houses of the American Whigs, and murdering and scalping their wives and children, had left them for the Government of their King in England and Nova Scotia. "We do not miss them," he said, "nor wish their return; nor do we envy them their present happiness."[1]

This letter also mildly deprecates the honor that Small did him in naming him with Timoleon. "I am like him only in retiring from my public labours," he declared, "which indeed my stone, and other infirmities of age, have made indispensably necessary."

The enthusiasm of the French people had drawn so freely upon the heroes of antiquity for a parallel to him

[1] A letter from Franklin to Francis Maseres, dated Passy, June 26, 1785, suggests an additional reason why the antipathy of the American Whigs to the American loyalists was so unrelenting. "The war against us was begun by a general act of Parliament, declaring all our estates confiscated; and probably one great motive to the loyalty of the royalists was the hope of sharing in these confiscations. They have played a deep game, staking their estates against ours; and they have been unsuccessful. But it is a surer game, since they had promises to rely on from your government, of indemnification in case of loss; and I see your Parliament is about to fulfil those Promises. To this I have no objection, because, though still our enemies, they are men; they are in necessity; and I think even a hired assassin has a right to his pay from his employer."

that Dr. Small, perhaps, had to put up with Timoleon in default of a better classical congener.

Other English friends of Franklin were John Alleyne, Edward Bridgen, Edmund Burke, Mrs. Thompson, John Whitehurst, Anthony Tissington, Thomas Viny and Caleb Whitefoord. Our attention has already been called to his pithy reflections on early marriages in one of his letters to John Alleyne.

> Treat your Wife [he said, in the concluding sentences of this admirable letter] always with Respect; it will procure Respect to you, not from her only but from all that observe it. Never use a slighting Expression to her, even in jest, for Slights in Jest, after frequent bandyings, are apt to end in angry earnest. Be studious in your Profession, and you will be learned. Be industrious and frugal, and you will be rich. Be sober and temperate, and you will be healthy. Be in general virtuous, and you will be happy. At least, you will, by such Conduct, stand the best Chance for such Consequences.

In another letter to Alleyne, with his unerring good sense, he makes short work of the perverse prejudice against intermarriage with a deceased wife's sister which was destined to die so hard in the English mind.

To Edward Bridgen, a merchant of London, Franklin referred in a letter to Governor Alexander Martin of North Carolina as "a particular Friend of mine and a zealous one of the American Cause." The object of the letter was to reclaim from confiscation property in that state belonging to Bridgen. And it was to Bridgen that Franklin made the suggestion that, instead of repeating continually upon every half penny the dull story that everybody knew (and that it would have been no loss to mankind if nobody had ever known) that George III. was King of Great Britain, France and Ireland, etc., etc., there should be inscribed on the coin some important

proverb of Solomon, some pious moral, prudential or economical precept, calculated to leave an impression upon the mind, especially of young persons, such as on some, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom"; on others, "Honesty is the best Policy"; on others, "He that by the plow would thrive, himself must either hold or drive"; on others, "Keep thy Shop, and thy Shop will keep thee"; on others, "A penny saved is a penny got"; on others, "He that buys what he has no need of, will soon be forced to sell his necessaries"; and on others, "Early to bed and early to rise, will make a man healthy, wealthy, and wise."

With Edmund Burke Franklin does not appear to have been intimate, but they knew each other well enough for the former in a letter to the latter to term the friendship between them an "old friendship." It was Burke who remarked, when Franklin was examined before the House of Commons on American affairs, that it was as if a schoolmaster was being catechized by his pupils. For every reason, the judgment of so great a man about such an incident has its value, but among other reasons because Burke was accounted one of the best-informed men in England in relation to American affairs.

The only glimpse we obtain of Mrs. Thompson is in a letter written to her by Franklin from Paris, shortly after his arrival in France in 1776, but the raillery of this letter is too familiar in tone to have marked the course of anything but real intimacy.

> You are too early, *Hussy* [he wrote], (as well as too saucy,) in calling me *Rebel;* you should wait for the Event, which will determine whether it is a *Rebellion* or only a *Revolution.* Here the Ladies are more civil; they call us *les Insurgens,* a Character that usually pleases them: And methinks all other Women who smart, or have smarted, under the Tyranny of a bad Husband, ought to be fixed in Revolution Principles, and act accordingly.

Then Mrs. Thompson is told some gossipy details about a common friend whom Franklin had seen during the preceding spring at New York, and these are succeeded by some gay sallies with regard to Mrs. Thompson's restlessness.

Pray learn [he said], if you have not already learnt, like me, to be pleased with other People's Pleasures, and happy with their Happiness, when none occur of your own; and then perhaps you will not so soon be weary of the Place you chance to be in, and so fond of Rambling to get rid of your *Ennui*. I fancy you have hit upon the right Reason of your being Weary of St. Omer's, viz. that you are out of Temper, which is the effect of full Living and Idleness. A Month in Bridewell, beating Hemp, upon Bread and Water, would give you Health and Spirits, and subsequent Cheerfulness and Contentment with every other Situation. I prescribe that Regimen for you, my dear, in pure good will, without a Fee. And let me tell you, if you do not get into Temper, neither Brussels nor Lisle will suit you. I know nothing of the Price of Living in either of those Places; but I am sure a single Woman, as you are, might with Economy upon two hundred Pounds a year maintain herself comfortably anywhere, and me into the Bargain. Do not invite me in earnest, however, to come and live with you; for, being posted here, I ought not to comply, and I am not sure I should be able to refuse.

This letter was written shortly after Franklin's arrival in France, but he had already caught the infection of French gallantry. It closes with a lifelike portrait of himself.

I know you wish you could see me [he said], but, as you can't, I will describe myself to you. Figure me in your mind as jolly as formerly, and as strong and hearty, only a few years older; very plainly dress'd, wearing my thin gray strait hair, that peeps out under my only Coiffure, a fine Fur Cap, which comes down my Forehead almost to my Spectacles. Think how this must appear among the Powder'd Heads of Paris!

I wisn every gentleman and Lady in France would only be so obliging as to follow my Fashion, comb their own Heads as I do mine, dismiss their *Friseurs*, and pay me half the Money they paid to them. You see, the gentry might well afford this, and I could then enlist those *Friseurs*, who are at least 100,000, and with the Money I would maintain them, make a Visit with them to England, and dress the Heads of your Ministers and Privy Counsellors; which I conceive to be at present *un peu dérangées*. Adieu, Madcap; and believe me ever, your affectionate Friend and humble Servant.

John Whitehurst, who was a maker of watches and philosophical instruments, and the author of an *Inquiry into the Original State and Formation of the Earth*, and his friend, Anthony Tissington, were residents of Derbyshire. Some of Whitehurst's letters to Franklin are still in existence, but none from Franklin to Whitehurst are. A letter from Franklin to Tissington has preserved one of the writer's characteristic stories. After speaking of the rheumatic pains, to which Mrs. Tissington was subject, he said:

Tis a most wicked Distemper, & often puts me in mind of the Saying of a Scotch Divine to some of his Brethren who were complaining that their Flocks had of late been infected with *Arianism* and *Socinianism*. Mine, says he, is infected with a worse *ism* than either of those.—Pray, Brother, what can that be?—It is, the *Rheumatism*.

Thomas Viny was a wheel manufacturer of Tenterden, Kent. In a letter to him, Franklin tells him that he cannot without extreme reluctance think of using any arguments to persuade him to remove to America, because of the pain that the removal would occasion to Viny's brother. Possibly, however, he added, Viny might afterwards judge it not amiss, when the many children that he was likely to have, were grown up, to plant one of them in America, where he might prepare an asylum for the

rest should any great calamity, which might God avert, befall England. A man he knew, who had a number of sons, used to say that he chose to settle them at some distance from each other, for he thought they throve better, as he remarked that cabbages, growing too near together, were not so likely to come to a head.

I shall be asleep before that time [Franklin continued], otherwise he might expect and command my best Advice and Assistance. But as the Ancients who knew not how to write had a Method of transmitting Friendships to Posterity; the Guest who had been hospitably entertain'd in a strange Country breaking a Stick with every one who did him a kindness; and the Producing such a Tally at any Time afterwards, by a Descendant of the Host, to a Son or Grandson of the Guest, was understood as a good Claim to special Regard besides the Common Rights of Hospitality: So if this Letter should happen to be preserv'd, your Son may produce it to mine as an Evidence of the Good will that once subsisted between their Fathers, as an Acknowledgment of the Obligations you laid me under by your many Civilities when I was in your Country and a Claim to all the Returns due from me if I had been living.

Another letter from Franklin to Viny was written at Passy. He joined most heartily he said with Viny in his prayers that the Almighty, who had favored the just cause, would perfect his work, and establish freedom in the New World as an asylum for those of the Old who deserved it. He thought the war a detestable one, and grieved much at the mischief and misery it was occasioning to many; his only consolation being that he did all in his power to prevent it. What a pleasure it would be to him on his return to America to see his old friend and his children settled there! "I hope," Franklin concluded, "he will find Vines and Fig-trees there for all of them, under which we may sit and converse, enjoying Peace and

Plenty, a good Government, good Laws, and Liberty, without which Men lose half their Value."

Caleb Whitefoord resided at No. 8 Craven Street, London, or next door to Mrs. Stevenson's, where Franklin resided during his two missions to England, and the friendship between Franklin and himself, though very cordial on Whitefoord's part, would seem to have been on Franklin's part, though cordial, the friendship mainly of mere propinquity.[1]

Far more significant were the ties which bound Franklin to such English friends as Peter Collinson, the Rev. George Whitefield, Lord Le Despencer, James Hutton, David Hartley and George Whatley.

Peter Collinson was a London mercer who had a considerable correspondence with America. He not only enjoyed an acquaintance with men of prominence and influence in the Colonies, but he earnestly interested himself in promoting the production of American flax, hemp, silk and wine. He was a fellow of the Royal Society, besides being one of the founders of the Society of Antiquaries, and it was directly due to the electric tube sent over by him to the Library Company of Philadelphia that Franklin

[1] The business of Whitefoord as a wine-merchant was carried on at No. 8 Craven Street, and he enjoyed a considerable reputation for wit in his time. He served as Secretary to the Commission that settled the terms of peace with the United States. He was, Burke thought, a mere *diseur de bons mots*. Goldsmith deemed him of sufficient importance to make him the subject of an epitaph intended to be worked into the Retaliation, and reading as follows:

> "Here Whitefoord reclines, deny it who can;
> Tho' he merrily lived, he is now a grave man.
> What pity, alas! that so lib'ral a mind
> Should so long be to Newspaper Essays confined!
> Who perhaps to the summit of science might soar,
> Yet content if the table he set in a roar;
> Whose talents to fit any station were fit,
> Yet happy if Woodfall confessed him a wit."

His intimacy with Franklin, Whitefoord said on one occasion, had been the "pride and happiness" of his life.

entered upon those experiments in electricity which he communicated to Collinson in a series of memorable letters, that brought lasting renown to their author when given to the world by Collinson. In a letter to Michael Collinson, Franklin speaks of Peter Collinson as our "dear departed Friend," and pays a feeling tribute to his unselfish patronage of the Library at Philadelphia. He alludes to the valuable presents made to the Library by Collinson and others, whose generosity had been kindled by Collinson's zeal, and he states the remarkable fact that for more than thirty years successively Collinson had participated in the annual selection of books for the Library, and had shouldered the whole burden of buying them in London, and shipping them to Philadelphia without ever charging or even accepting any consideration for his trouble. Nay more, during the same time, he had transmitted to the directors of the Library Company the earliest account of every new European improvement in Agriculture and the Arts, or discovery in Philosophy. Curious in botany as Collinson may have been, it is not hazardous to say that he never gathered or sowed any seed more fruitful than these benefactions, and we can readily understand how deeply his friendship must have been cherished by a spirit so congenial with his as that of Franklin. They were friends before they ever met, but it was not until Franklin arrived in London on his first mission to England that they greeted each other face to face. Franklin's first letter to America, written the day after he reached London, was hastily penned at Collinson's house, and, the next day, John Hanbury, the great Virginia merchant, by an arrangement with Collinson, called for Franklin in his carriage, and conveyed him to the house of Lord Granville for an interview with that nobleman. The letters from Franklin to Collinson on the subject of electricity are, we hardly need say, the most important of the former's letters to him, but very valuable, too, are

some of his observations in other letters to his correspondent on political conditions in Pennsylvania and the relations between the Colonies and the mother country. To the scientific letters and to these observations we shall have occasion to revert further on. Beyond a reference to some black silk, sent by Collinson to Deborah, with a generous disregard of the fact that the fowl meadow grass seed that Franklin had sent to him from America never came up, the correspondence between Collinson and Franklin is marked by few intimate features. It was, however, on the back of a letter from Franklin to Collinson, in which the former condoled with the latter on the loss of his wife, that this good man, for such we must believe Collinson to have been, indorsed these singular comments, the offspring probably of purely morbid self-reproach:

> There was no occasion of any Phylosophy on this ever to be lamented occasion. Peter Collinson had few feelings but for Himself. The same Principle that led him to deprive his son of his Birthright when that son lay in the Agonies of Death and knew not what he put his hand to, supported Peter Collinson in the loss of the best of Women in a manner that did no Honour to his Feelings, his Gratitude or his Humanity.

The eye of the reader has already been drawn to the Rev. George Whitefield, whose eloquence, we are told by Franklin in the *Autobiography*, "had a wonderful power over the hearts and purses of his hearers." After the death of Whitefield, Franklin paid this handsome tribute to him in a letter to Robert Morris and Thomas Leach. "I knew him intimately upwards of thirty years. His Integrity, Disinterestedness, and indefatigable Zeal in prosecuting every good Work, I have never seen equalled, I shall never see exceeded." To Franklin, too, we are indebted for a striking description of his characteristics as an orator, when he came over to Philadelphia from

Ireland, and, after being at first permitted to preach in some churches, was later compelled to preach in the fields, because the clergy took a dislike to him, and refused him their pulpits.

He had a loud and clear voice, and articulated his words and sentences so perfectly, that he might be heard and understood at a great distance, especially as his auditories, however numerous, observ'd the most exact silence. He preach'd one evening from the top of the Court-house steps, which are in the middle of Market-Street, and on the west side of Second-Street, which crosses it at right angles. Both streets were fill'd with his hearers to a considerable distance. Being among the hindmost in Market-Street, I had the curiosity to learn how far he could be heard, by retiring backwards down the street towards the river; and I found his voice distinct till I came near Front-Street, when some noise in the street obscur'd it. Imagining then a semi-circle, of which my distance should be the radius, and that it were fill'd with auditors, to each of whom I allow'd two square feet, I computed that he might well be heard by more than thirty thousand. This reconcil'd me to the newspaper accounts of his having preach'd to twenty-five thousand people in the fields, and to the antient histories of generals haranguing whole armies, of which I had sometimes doubted.

By experience, Franklin came to distinguish easily between Whitefield's newly composed sermons and those which he had often preached in the course of his travels.

His delivery of the latter was so improv'd by frequent repetitions that every accent, every emphasis, every modulation of voice, was so perfectly well turn'd and well plac'd, that, without being interested in the subject, one could not help being pleas'd with the discourse; a pleasure of much the same kind with that receiv'd from an excellent piece of musick.

Notwithstanding the extraordinary influence of White-

field's oratory over his auditors, to which Franklin testifies so unqualifiedly, it is obvious enough, as we have seen, that a nature so little given to extreme forms of enthusiasm as that of Franklin could not but regard the hysteria produced by it with some degree of contemptuous amusement.

Who [he asked in his Essay on "Shavers and Trimmers," in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*], has been more notorious for shaving and fleecing, than that Apostle of Apostles, that Preacher of Preachers, the Rev. Mr. G. W.? But I forbear making farther mention of this spiritual Shaver and Trimmer, lest I should affect the Minds of my Readers as deeply as his Preaching has affected their Pockets.

This was mere jesting on the part of a man to whom everything had its humorous as well as its serious side. Very different in spirit are some of the passages in Franklin's letters to Whitefield.

I am glad to hear [he wrote on one occasion] that you have frequent opportunities of preaching among the great. If you can gain them to a good and exemplary life, wonderful changes will follow in the manners of the lower ranks; for *ad exemplum regis*, etc. On this principle, Confucius, the famous Eastern reformer, proceeded. When he saw his country sunk in vice, and wickedness of all kinds triumphant, he applied himself first to the grandees; and having, by his doctrine, won *them* to the cause of virtue, the commons followed in multitudes. The mode has a wonderful influence on mankind; and there are numbers who, perhaps, fear less the being in hell, than out of the fashion. Our most western reformations began with the ignorant mob; and when numbers of them were gained, interest and party views drew in the wise and great. Where both methods can be used, reformations are likely to be more speedy. O that some method could be found to make them lasting! He who discovers that will, in my opinion, deserve more, ten thousand times, than the inventor of the longitude.

Another letter from Franklin to Whitefield is not only distinguished by the same missionary accent but also by the deep-seated loyalty to the English Crown which was so slow in yielding first to disillusionment and then to detestation. Alluding to Whitefield's desire to be the chaplain of an American army, he said that he wished that they could be jointly employed by the Crown to settle a colony on the Ohio.

> What a glorious Thing [he exclaimed] it would be, to settle in that fine Country a large strong Body of Religious and Industrious People! What a Security to the other Colonies; and Advantage to Britain, by Increasing her People, Territory, Strength and Commerce! Might it not greatly facilitate the Introduction of pure Religion among the Heathen, if we could, by such a Colony, show them a better Sample of Christians than they commonly see in our Indian Traders, the most vicious and abandoned Wretches of our Nation? . . . Life, like a dramatic Piece, should not only be conducted with Regularity, but methinks it should finish handsomely. Being now in the last Act, I begin to cast about for something fit to end with. Or if mine be more properly compar'd to an Epigram, as some of its few Lines are but barely tolerable, I am very desirous of concluding with a bright Point. In such an Enterprise I could spend the Remainder of Life with Pleasure; and I firmly believe God would bless us with Success, if we undertook it with a sincere Regard to his Honour, the Service of our gracious King, and (which is the same thing) the Publick Good.

From the joint enterprise of settling a colony on the Ohio with Whitefield to the joint enterprise of abridging the Book of English Prayer with Lord Le Despencer was a far cry, but not too far for Franklin, as we have seen.

Lord Le Despencer, or Sir Francis Dashwood, as he was known, when he was one of the jolly monks of Medmenham Abbey, was numbered by Franklin among his best friends, and at West Wycombe, the country seat of

this nobleman, Franklin spent many happy hours. On one occasion, he writes to his son that he has passed sixteen days there most agreeably. On another occasion, he tells him that he has just come to West Wycombe to spend a few days and breathe a little fresh air. "I am in this House," he said, "as much at my Ease as if it was my own; and the Gardens are a Paradise." After a journey to Oxford, with Lord Le Despencer, he informed the same correspondent that the former was very good to him on all occasions and seemed of late very desirous of his company. Whatever else the owner of West Wycombe may have been, Franklin's letters leave us no room to doubt that he was a capital host.

To a very different type of character in every respect belonged James Hutton, another dear friend of Franklin. He was a bookseller at the sign of the Bible and Sun, west of Temple Bar, and for fifty-five years a zealous member of the Moravian Church. His interest in the missionary labors of that Church, his benevolence, which knew no sectarian limitations, his sense and simplicity of manners won for him an honorable standing even in Court Circles. We are told by William Temple Franklin that he was highly esteemed by George III. and his consort, and was well known to many of the English nobility and men of letters; not being refused admittance to the highest ranks even at Buckingham House, though his ardent benevolence inclined him greatly to neglect his own dress that he might better feed the hungry and cover the naked. A man of that kind always had easy access to the heart of Franklin, open though its hospitable portals were to other friends of a very different description. In a letter to David Hartley from Passy, Franklin speaks of Hutton in these terms: "An old Friend of mine, Mr. Hutton, a Chief of the Moravians, who is often at the Queen's Palace, and is sometimes spoken to by the King, was over here lately." In a letter to Hutton himself

from Passy, Franklin applies to him the term, "My dear old friend," which with its different variations meant with him the high-water mark of intimacy. Hutton is also brought to our sight, though in a droll way, in the Craven Street *Gazette*, the mock Chronicle, in which Franklin, with a delicacy and richness of humor all his own, pictures No. 7 Craven Street as a Court, Mrs. Stevenson as a Queen, with lords and ladies in her train, and Hutton and himself as rivals for the good graces of Dolly Blount, Polly's friend.

This Morning [the *Gazette* notes, under date of Tuesday, Sept. 25], my good Lord Hutton call'd at Craven-Street House and enquir'd very respectfully & affectionately concerning the Welfare of the Queen. He then imparted to the big Man (Franklin himself) a Piece of Intelligence important to them both, and but just communicated by Lady Hawkesworth, viz. that the amiable and delectable Companion, Miss D (orothea) B (lount), had made a Vow to marry absolutely him of the two whose Wife should first depart this Life. It is impossible to express the various Agitations of Mind appearing in both their Faces on this Occasion. *Vanity* at the Preference given them over the rest of Mankind; *Affection* to their present Wives, *Fear* of losing them, *Hope*, if they must lose them, to obtain the proposed Comfort; *Jealousy* of each other in case both Wives should die together, &c. &c. &c.,— all working at the same time jumbled their Features into inexplicable Confusion. They parted at length with Professions & outward Appearances indeed of ever-enduring Friendship, but it was shrewdly suspected that each of them sincerely wished Health & long Life to the other's Wife; & that however long either of these Friends might like to live himself, the other would be very well pleas'd to survive him.

Hutton was one of the simple and warm-hearted friends of Franklin who endeavored by their individual exertions to accelerate the restoration of peace between Great Britain and America, and, like all of Franklin's English

friends, who kept up a correspondence with him, while the war was going on, he had to read some scathing fulminations against England.

You have lost by this mad War [Franklin said in one letter to Hutton], and the Barbarity with which it has been carried on, not only the Government and Commerce of America, and the public Revenues and private Wealth arising from that Commerce, but what is more, you have lost the Esteem, Respect, Friendship, and Affection of all that great and growing People, who consider you at present, and whose Posterity will consider you, as the worst and wickedest Nation upon Earth.

Twelve days later, Franklin annexed a postscript to this letter which must have been an even severer trial to Hutton's equanimity than the letter itself.

I abominate with you [he said], all Murder, and I may add, that the Slaughter of Men in an unjust Cause is nothing less than Murder; I therefore never think of your present Ministers and their Abettors, but with the Image strongly painted in my View, of their Hands, red, wet, and dropping with the Blood of my Countrymen, Friends, and Relations.

Franklin's opinion of the King was imparted to Hutton in terms fully as indignant. The letter, in which this was done, was prompted by a letter from Hutton to a third person giving an account of some abominable murders inflicted by American frontiersmen upon the poor Moravian Indians. This time it was not English, but American hands that were red with blood, but Franklin was resourceful enough all the same to fix the responsibility for the murders by a train of indirect reasoning on the King. Why, he asked, had a single man in England, who happened to love blood and to hate Americans, been permitted to gratify that bad temper by hiring German murderers, and joining them with his own to destroy, in a continued

course of bloody years, near 100,000 human creatures, many of them possessed of useful talents, virtues and abilities to which he had no pretension! It was he who had furnished the savages with hatchets and scalping knives, and engaged them to fall upon defenceless American farmers, and murder them with their wives and children, paying for their scalps, of which the account kept in America already amounted, he had heard, to near two thousand. Perhaps, the people of the frontiers, he declared, exasperated by the cruelties of the Indians, had been induced to kill all Indians that fell into their hands without distinction; so that even these horrid murders of the poor Moravians might be laid to the King's charge.

And yet [said Franklin] this Man lives, enjoys all the good Things this World can afford, and is surrounded by Flatterers, who keep even his Conscience quiet by telling him he is the best of Princes! I wonder at this, but I can not therefore part with the comfortable Belief of a Divine Providence; and the more I see the Impossibility, from the number & extent of his Crimes, of giving equivalent Punishment to a wicked Man in this Life, the more I am convinc'd of a future State, in which all that here appears to be wrong shall be set right, all that is crooked made straight. In this Faith let you & I, my dear Friend, comfort ourselves; it is the only Comfort, in the present dark Scene of Things, that is allowed us.

The friendship between Franklin and David Hartley had to endure the concussion of some knocks even harder than these. Hartley was the son of David Hartley, the philosopher, from whom Hartley Coleridge, the poet, derived his name. He was a B. A. of Corpus Christi, Oxford, and a fellow of Merton College, and represented Hull in Parliament from 1774 to 1780 and from 1782 to 1784. An adherent of Lord Rockingham, and a warm friend of Franklin, he was naturally enough selected as the British plenipotentiary to assist in drawing up the treaty

of peace between Great Britain and America. Before this time, however, he had been engaged in a protracted correspondence with Franklin, marked by a degree of liberality and humane feeling on his part which did him great honor. To alleviate the condition of American prisoners in England, to promote the exchange of these prisoners and British prisoners in America, to bring about a reunion between Great Britain and her colonies, and, that failing, a separation attended by as little mutual animosity as possible, were the generous objects to which his efforts were addressed. In pursuing these objects, he must have found it difficult at times to submit meekly to some of the ireful invective against his King, Parliament and People, which punctuates Franklin's solicitation of his mediatory offices, in behalf of American prisoners, and pleas for a peace between Great Britain and America, attended by really generous concessions upon the part of Great Britain. The year after his arrival in France as our minister, Franklin wrote to Hartley:

> As to our submitting to the government of Great Britain, it is vain to think of it. She has given us, by her numberless barbarities in the prosecution of the war, and in the treatment of prisoners, by her malice in bribing slaves to murder their masters, and savages to massacre the families of farmers, with her baseness in rewarding the unfaithfulness of servants, and debauching the virtue of honest seamen, intrusted with our property, so deep an impression of her depravity, that we never again can trust her in the management of our affairs and interests.

As the war went on, leaving its trail of blood and increasing hatred behind it, his language at times becomes even more intense. About a year and a half later, he wrote to Hartley, "We know that your King hates Whigs and Presbyterians; that he thirsts for our Blood, of which he has already drunk large Draughts; that his servile

unprincipled Ministers are ready to execute the Wickedest of his Orders, and his venal Parliament equally ready to vote them just." This outburst was evoked by what he conceived to be a cunning effort of the English Ministry to divide America and her French ally. The next outburst was provoked by the same cause. "The Truth is," he said, "we have no kind of Faith in your Government, which appears to us as insidious and deceitful as it is unjust and cruel; its Character is that of the Spider in Thomson,

> "Cunning and fierce,
> Mixture abhorr'd!!"

Finally, all the hurrying feelings aroused in him at times by what he called "bloody and insatiable Malice and Wickedness" became condensed in an abstract term so full of passion as "devilism." Franklin was not the man to take hold of the handles of a plough and then turn back. In his correspondence with Hartley, as with his other English friends, after he entered upon his mission to France, is the clearest recognition of the fact, to use his own robust figure of speech, that England had lost limbs which would never grow again, and his unwavering resolution to give his assent to nothing less than the complete independence of the Colonies. For him, for his country, there were never more to be any connecting links between Great Britain and America except those of mere international good will and commercial comity. Upon propositions of every sort, looking to a reconciliation between the two lands, he lingered solely for the purpose of obtaining for America, when peace finally came, as large a measure of territorial aggrandizement as he could possibly secure. Of a conciliatory bill, of which Hartley sent him a copy, he said, "It might have erected a Wall of Brass round England, if such a Measure had been adopted, when Fryar Bacon's brazen Head

cried out, TIME IS! But the wisdom of it was not seen, till after the fatal Cry of TIME'S PAST!"

It was the almost pathetic desire of such correspondents of Franklin as Hartley to save some sort of organic tie between the two countries from the wreckage wrought by the fatal policy of the British Ministry, which makes it difficult for us to read Franklin's French letters to men like Hutton and Hartley without feeling that the harsh terms, which he often employed in these letters about the English King, Parliament and People, were hardly fair to that courageous and high-minded band of English patriots, who made the American cause almost as much theirs as his own, and stopped only short of treason in the assertion of their belief that the immemorial liberties of England as well as the liberties of America were staked upon the issue of the American contest. It was the extreme outspoken dissatisfaction, with which English Whigs regarded the effort of the British Ministry to force its own violent and technical views of colonial policy upon America, that made it possible for Franklin to write to Englishmen as he did about their government without exciting either frank or sullen resentment. But there was undoubtedly still another reason with which politics had nothing to do. These Whigs not only respected the manly candor, with which Franklin expressed convictions that they knew had been formed by a singularly enlightened, generous and sober mind, once devotedly attached by the strongest ties of tradition and affection to the colonial connection between Great Britain and America, but they had been too intimate with him personally not to be aware that it was not in his nature to harbor any real or lasting malignity of feeling towards anyone. And that this view of his character was correct is shown by more than one feature of his correspondence with Hartley. In a letter to Hartley, he said that, when Hartley's nation was hiring all the cutthroats it could collect of all countries

and colors to destroy the Americans, it was hard to persuade the Americans not to ask, or accept of, aid from any country that might be prevailed with to grant it, and this from the hope that, though the British then thirsted for their blood, and pursued them with fire and sword, they might in some future time treat them kindly. But the outbreak does not seem so fierce when he goes on to say, "America has been *forc'd* and *driven* into the Arms of France. She was a dutiful and virtuous Daughter. A cruel Mother-in-law turn'd her out of Doors, defam'd her, and sought her Life. All the World knows her Innocence, and takes her part; and her Friends hope soon to see her honorably married." One of the peculiarities of that kindly and facetious nature was that its sense of humor would at times work its way even between the lines of formal state papers; to say nothing of letters to a familiar friend on the conduct of an enemy. Nor could Hartley doubt that the old well-springs of mirth and loving kindness were as full as ever to overflowing, when, in response to a letter from him to Franklin, containing the Scotch ballad, *Auld Robin Gray*, he received this lively application of the ballad to existing conditions:

I cannot make an entire application of it to present Circumstances; but, taking it in Parts, and changing Persons, some of it is extremely *apropos*. First Jenie may be supposed Old England, and Jamie, America. Jenie laments the loss of Jamie, and recollects with Pain his Love for her, his Industry in Business to promote her Wealth and Welfare, and her own Ingratitude.

"Young Jamie loved me weel,
And sought me for his Bride,
But saving ane Crown,
He had naithing beside,

To make that Crown a Pound, my Jamie gang'd to Sea,
And the Crown and the Pound were all for me."

Her grief for this Separation is expressed very pathetically.

'The ship was a Wrack,
Why did na Jennie die;
O why was I spared
To cry, Wae is me!"

There is no Doubt but that honest Jammie had still so much Love for her as to Pity her in his Heart, tho' he might, at the same time, be not a little angry with her.

Towards the Conclusion, we must change the Persons, and let Jamie be old England, Jennie, America, and old Robin Gray, the Kingdom of France. Then honest Jenie, having made a Treaty of Marriage with Gray, expresses her firm Resolution of Fidelity, in a manner that does Honour to her good Sense, and her Virtue.

"I may not think of Jamie,
For that would be a Sin,
But I maun do my best,
A gude wife to be;
For auld Robin Gray
Is very kind to me."

How was it possible for Hartley to remain angry with a man like this, even if he was told by him in another letter that, though there could be but few things, in which he would venture to disobey the orders of Congress, he would, nevertheless, instantly renounce the commission that he held from it, and banish himself forever from so infamous a country as America, if Congress were to instruct him to seek a truce of ten years with Great Britain, with the stipulation that America was not to assist France during that time, if the war between Great Britain and France continued? This was trying, though not so trying perhaps as his statement in still another letter to Hartley that he thought of his reasonings to show that, if France should require of America something unreasonable, America would not be obliged by the treaty between

them to continue the war as her ally, what he supposed an honest woman would think, if a gallant should entertain her with suppositions of cases in which infidelity to her husband would be justifiable. Nor was the merry adaptation of the ballad of *Auld Robin Gray* the only thing of the kind that tended to relieve the tension of the reproaches heaped by Franklin upon Great Britain in his letters to Hartley. In the same letter, in which he depicts the King as thirsty for still further draughts of American blood, and repels with apparently hot wrath the suggestion of Hartley that the alliance between France and America was the greatest stumbling-block in the way of peace between Great Britain and France, he tells Hartley that the proposition to separate France and America puts him in mind of the comic farce entitled *God-send, or The Wreckers*. It was not hard, of course, for him to be put in mind of something conceived by his own mind. The farce opens with this stage introduction: (A Ship riding at anchor in a great Storm. A Lee Shore full of Rocks, and lin'd with people, furnish'd with Axes & Carriages to cut up Wrecks, knock the Sailors on the Head, and carry off the Plunder; according to Custom.) Then, after a lively dialogue between the wreckers, who have grown impatient with the staunch way in which the ship is riding out the storm, they put off in a boat in the hope of luring her to the shore, and come under her stern, and try to persuade her captain, in the course of another lively dialogue, that his cable is a damned rotten French cable, and will part of itself in half an hour; only to be told by the captain that they are rogues, and offer nothing but treachery and mischief, and that his cable is good and strong, and would hold long enough to balk their projects. The dialogue ends with the exclamation by the spokesman of the wreckers, "Come, my Lads, let's be gone. This Fellow is not so great a Fool as we took him to be."

Familiar affection glistens in every line of the letters from Franklin to George Whatley, and one of them is suffused with the genial warmth of his best social hours. After some strictures on an epitaph by Pope, he said in this letter:

I like better the concluding Sentiment in the old Song, call'd *The Old Man's Wish*, wherein, after wishing for a warm house in a country Town, an easy Horse, some good old authors, ingenious and cheerful Companions, a Pudding on Sundays, with stout Ale, and a bottle of Burgundy, &c., &c., in separate Stanzas, each ending with this burthen,

> "May I govern my Passions with an absolute sway,
> Grow wiser and better as my Strength wears away,
> Without Gout or Stone, by a gentle Decay";

he adds,

"With a courage undaunted may I face my last day,
And, when I am gone, may the better Sort say,
'In the Morning when Sober, in the Evening when mellow,
He's gone, and has not left behind him his Fellow;
For he governed his Passions, &c.'"

But what signifies our Wishing? Things happen, after all, as they will happen. I have sung that *wishing Song* a thousand times, when I was young, and now find, at Four-score, that the three Contraries have befallen me, being subject to the Gout and the Stone, and not being yet Master of all my Passions. Like the proud Girl in my Country, who wished and resolv'd not to marry a Parson, nor a Presbyterian, nor an Irishman; and at length found herself married to an Irish Presbyterian Parson.

In the course of one of the summer rambles, which he took every year for twenty years, for health and recreation, Franklin twice visited Scotland, once in 1759, and once in 1771. As the result of civilities received by him in that country at the hands of Sir Alexander Dick, the President

of the College of Physicians at Edinburgh, and Henry Home, Lord Kames, a Judge of the Court of Session, and author of *The Elements of Criticism* and *The Sketches of the History of Man*, he became a fast friend of these two eminent men. After completing with his son a tour of nearly 1500 miles in 1759, he wrote to Sir Alexander Dick, whose guests they had been for a time, that the many civilities, favors and kindnesses heaped upon them, while they were in Scotland, had made the most lasting impression upon their minds, and endeared that country to them beyond expression. In the same letter, he asked Sir Alexander to assure Lady Dick that he had great faith in her parting prayers that the purse she honored him with would never be quite empty. His letters to Lord Kames testified in even stronger terms to the happy hours that he had spent in Scotland on this visit.

How unfortunate I was [he wrote to him] that I did not press you and Lady Kames more strongly to favor us with your company farther. How much more agreeable would our journey have been, if we could have enjoyed you as far as York. We could have beguiled the way, by discoursing of a thousand things, that now we may never have an opportunity of considering together; for conversation warms the mind, enlivens the imagination, and is continually starting fresh game, that is immediately pursued and taken, and which would never have occurred in the duller intercourse of epistolary correspondence. So that whenever I reflect on the great pleasure and advantage I received from the free communication of sentiment, in the conversations we had at Kames, and in the agreeable little rides to the Tweed side, I shall forever regret our premature parting.

Even more fervid was the conclusion of this letter:

Our conversation till we came to York, was chiefly a recollection of what we had seen and heard, the pleasure we had enjoyed, and the kindness we had received in Scotland, and

how far that country had exceeded our expectations. On the whole, I must say, I think the time we spent there, was six weeks of the *densest* happiness I have met with in any part of my life: and the agreeable and instructive society we found there in such plenty, has left so pleasing an impression on my memory, that did not strong connexions draw me elsewhere, I believe Scotland would be the country I should choose to spend the remainder of my days in.

In a later letter to Lord Kames, he returns to the same pleasing field of association.

Your invitation to make another jaunt to Scotland, and offer to meet us half way *en famille*, was extremely obliging. Certainly I never spent my time anywhere more agreeably, nor have I been in any place, where the inhabitants and their conversation left such lastingly pleasing impressions on my mind, accompanied with the strongest inclination once more to visit that hospitable, friendly, and sensible people.

When we recall Franklin's distaste for theology and metaphysics, the humor that ever lurked about his lips, and Sydney Smith's famous observation that it requires a surgical operation to get a joke into a Scotchman's head, we may well experience a sensation of momentary surprise when we read these earnest tributes to the charm of Scotch social conditions in 1759—a sense of surprise increased by the fact that, in the *Autobiography*, Franklin ends a little dissertation on the odious nature of disputation with these words: "Persons of good sense, I have since observed, seldom fall into it, except lawyers, university men, and men of all sorts that have been bred at Edinborough." But all such sensations of surprise pass away when we remember that manly simplicity, practical sagacity, a spirit of enterprise and a love of learning, which no discouragements can chill, were also Scotch characteristics that Franklin shared with Scotchmen.

When Franklin returned in 1771 to the "odious-smells, barbarous sounds, bad suppers, excellent hearts and most enlightened understandings," amid which Sydney Smith, with his exaggerated humor, afterwards pictured himself as dwelling when he was a resident of Edinburgh, William Franklin did not accompany him.

In Scotland [Franklin wrote to his son after this second visit] I spent 5 Days with Lord Kaims at his Seat, Blair Drummond near Stirling, two or three Days at Glasgow, two Days at Carron Iron Works, and the rest of the Month in and about Edinburgh, lodging at David Hume's, who entertain'd me with the greatest Kindness and Hospitality, as did Lord Kaims & his Lady. All our old Acquaintance there, Sir Alex^{r} Dick and Lady, Mr. M^{c}Gowan, Drs. Robertson, Cullen, Black, Ferguson, Russel, and others, enquired affectionately of your Welfare. I was out three Months, and the Journey was evidently of great service to my Health.

The letters from Franklin to Lord Kames cover a great variety of topics; and to his observations on some of these topics, which were of a political or scientific nature, we shall return in other connections. One letter was written, when Franklin was on the eve of sailing from Portsmouth to America in 1762, and that the moment of embarkation upon the perilous seas of that time was a solemn one is manifest enough in its opening statements:

My dear Lord,

I am now waiting here only for a wind to waft me to America, but cannot leave this happy island and my friends in it, without extreme regret, though I am going to a country and a people that I love. I am going from the old world to the new; and I fancy I feel like those, who are leaving this world for the next: grief at the parting; fear of the passage; hope of the future.

But never were votive chaplets woven and gratefully suspended by a voyager after a more prosperous passage

than this. Franklin left England in company with ten sail of merchant ships, under the convoy of a man-of-war, touched at the heavenly Madeira Islands, and was then caught up in the benign trade winds, and borne safely to the American coast.

The weather was so favourable [he stated in another letter to Lord Kames] that there were few days in which we could not visit from ship to ship, dining with each other, and on board of the man-of-war; which made the time pass agreeably, much more so than when one goes in a single ship; for this was like travelling in a moving village, with all one's neighbours about one.

Among the things upon which Franklin prided himself was the fact that he shaved himself, and in one of his letters to Lord Kames this trivial circumstance is brought to our notice in these wise words:

I have long been of an opinion similar to that you express, and think happiness consists more in small conveniences or pleasures that occur every day, than in great pieces of good fortune that happen but seldom to a man in the course of his life. Thus I reckon it among my felicities, that I can set my own razor, and shave myself perfectly well; in which I have a daily pleasure, and avoid the uneasiness one is sometimes obliged to suffer from the dirty fingers or bad breath of a slovenly barber.

There was also a link of friendship between Franklin and David Hume. In a letter to Strahan, Franklin, when on his visit to Scotland in 1771, writes to him that Hume, agreeably to the precepts of the Gospel, had received the stranger, and that he was then living with him at his house in the New Town at Edinburgh most happily. In another letter, a week or so later, he informed Strahan, after a short excursion from Edinburgh, that he was well and again under the hospitable roof

of the good Samaritan. Hume was too much of a bigoted Tory not to snarl a little at Franklin's "factious" spirit, when the Revolution was coming on, but, when Franklin was leaving England in 1762, he paid him this handsome compliment:

I am very sorry, that you intend soon to leave our hemisphere. America has sent us many good things, gold, silver, sugar, indigo, &c.; but you are the first philosopher, and indeed the first great man of letters for whom we are beholden to her. It is our own fault, that we have not kept him; whence it appears, that we do not agree with Solomon, that wisdom is above gold; for we take care never to send back an ounce of the latter, which we once lay our fingers upon.

It was a dangerous thing to enter into a competition of compliments with Franklin, as his reply to this letter showed.

Your compliment of *gold* and *wisdom* [he said] is very obliging to me, but a little injurious to your country. The various value of everything in every part of this world arises, you know, from the various proportions of the quantity to the demand. We are told, that gold and silver in Solomon's time were so plenty, as to be of no more value in his country than the stones in the street. You have here at present just such a plenty of wisdom. Your people are, therefore, not to be censured for desiring no more among them than they have; and if I have *any*, I should certainly carry it where, from its scarcity, it may probably come to a better market.

This was certainly a ponderous compliment, but it does not seem quite so much so, when read after the alleviating story which immediately preceded it. Referring to a ridiculous dispute, mentioned by his correspondent, he said:

Judges in their decisions often use precedents. I have somewhere met with one, that is what the lawyers call a *case*

in point. The Church people and the Puritans in a country town had once a bitter contention concerning the erecting of a Maypole, which the former desired and the latter opposed. Each party endeavoured to strengthen itself by obtaining the authority of the mayor, directing or forbidding a Maypole. He heard their altercation with great patience, and then gravely determined thus; "You, that are for having no Maypole, shall have no Maypole; and you, that are for having a Maypole, shall have a Maypole. Get about your business, and let me hear no more of this quarrel."

Other Scotch friends of Franklin were William Alexander, a connection of Lord Stirling, and his two daughters, one of whom, Mariamne, became the wife of Franklin's nephew, Jonathan Williams. A letter from Alexander to Franklin has its value because of the knowledge that it affords to us of the personal bearing of Arthur Lee who was, we shall see, jealous, haughty and sensitive enough to curdle even the sweet milk of Franklin's amiable nature. "I see," wrote Alexander, "you have made my old friend Lee a minister at Madrid, I think he has very much the manners of a Spaniard when he is not angry." It was Alexander also whose careful mercantile habits impelled him to write to Franklin, when he observed the disorder in which the latter kept his papers at Passy, this word of caution:

> Will you forgive me my Dear Sir for noticing, that your Papers seem to me to lye a little loosely about your hands—you are to consider yourself as surrounded by spies and amongst people who can make a cable from a thread; would not a spare half hour per day enable your son to arrange all your papers, useless or not, so that you could come at them sooner, and not one be visible to a prying eye.

The only intimate friend, we believe, that Franklin had in Ireland was Sir Edward Newenham, a member of the Irish Parliament, whose sympathy with the American

cause was so extreme that he appeared in his seat in deep mourning when the news of General Montgomery's death reached Ireland. Unfortunately, of the many letters, that Franklin wrote to him, only two or three, of comparatively meagre interest, survive. But of Ireland itself we have some graphic details in his letters to other persons. In one to Thomas Cushing, he says of the Irish, after a tour of the island with his friend, Richard Jackson, "There are many brave Spirits among them. The Gentry are a very sensible, polite, friendly and handsome People. Their Parliament makes a most respectable Figure, with a number of very good Speakers in both Parties, and able Men of Business." He then tells Cushing in modest terms how, when he was on his way to the gallery in the Parliament House at Dublin, the whole assembly, upon being informed by the Speaker that there was in town an American gentleman of distinguished character and merit, who was a member or delegate of some of the Parliaments in America, by a loud, unanimous expression of its will voted to admit him to the privileges of the floor; whereupon two members came to him without the bar, where he was standing, led him in and placed him very honorably.

Other friends of Franklin there were whom it is difficult to classify either as Englishmen or Americans, such as General Horatio Gates and General Charles Lee, who were born in England but became celebrated in America, and Benjamin West, the painter, who was born in America, but passed his mature life in England. That Franklin was on very friendly relations with Gates there can be no doubt, for in one of his letters to him he calls him his "Dear old friend," and that was a term never applied by him to any but his intimates. Nor can there be much doubt as to what it was that brought and kept Franklin and Gates together as friends. It was the game to which Franklin was so much addicted that he

even expounded its morals in an essay—chess. "When," he wrote to Gates from Passy, "shall we meet again in cheerful converse, talk over our adventures, and finish with a quiet game of chess?" And on the same day that he addressed to Washington the noble letter, declaring that, if the latter were to come to Europe, he would know and enjoy what posterity would say of Washington, he wrote to Gates, "May God give us soon a good Peace, and bring you and I (*sic*) together again over a Chess board, where we may have Battles without Bloodshed."

How an eccentric and perfidious man like General Charles Lee, whose temper alone was so repugnant to Franklin's dislike of disputation as to win for him the nickname of "Boiling Water" from the Indians, could ever have passed himself off with Franklin as genuine coin is hard to understand, but he appears to have done so. "Yours most affectionately," is the manner in which one of Franklin's letters to him ends. In another letter to Lee, Franklin gravely sums up in formal numerical sequence his reasons for thinking that bows and arrows were good weapons not wisely laid aside. The idea is one so little in harmony with his practical turn of mind, and is reasoned out so elaborately, that we form a shrewd suspicion as we read that this was after all but his humorous way of replying to his erratic friend's suggestion that the use of pikes by the American Army might not be a bad thing.

A very different kind of friend was Benjamin West. It was he that Franklin had in mind when he wrote to Polly Stevenson in 1763, "After the first Cares for the Necessaries of Life are over, we shall come to think of the Embellishments. Already some of our young Geniuses begin to lisp Attempts at Painting, Poetry, and Musick. We have a young Painter now studying at Rome." Twenty years later, the lisping attempts of America at painting had become so distinctly articulate, and the young

painter, who was studying at Rome, had become so famous, that Franklin could write to Jan Ingenhousz, "In England at present, the best History Painter, West; the best Portrait Painter, Copley, and the best Landscape Painter, Taylor, at Bath, are all Americans." Benjamin West, and his wife, as Elizabeth Shewell, were friends of Franklin and Deborah before West left his native Pennsylvania for Europe; and the friendship between the artist and his wife and Franklin was kept alive by affectionate intercourse in England. For one of West's sons Franklin became godfather. "It gave me great Pleasure," he said in a letter to West, referring to a letter from West to him, "as it inform'd me of the Welfare of a Family I so much esteem and love, and that my Godson is a promising Boy." The letter concludes with loving words for the godson and Raphael, West's oldest son, and "Betsey," West's wife.

We have by no means taken a complete census of Franklin's American and British friends. For instance, in a letter to Doctor Cooper from London, he refers to a Mr. Mead, first Commissioner of the Customs in England, whom we have not mentioned, as a particular and intimate friend of his; to say nothing of other persons with whom his intercourse was very friendly but either too colorless to arrest our attention in reading his correspondence, or even to bring them up in his correspondence at all. But we have marshalled quite enough of these friends before the eye of the reader, we are sure, to satisfy him that few human beings ever had such a wealth of affection heaped on them as Franklin.

CHAPTER VII

Franklin's French Friends

TO the host of friends mentioned above, numerous as it was, another great addition was to be made when Franklin became one of our envoys to France. In the various Colonies of America, so unlike each other in many respects, in England, in Scotland, his liberal instincts and quick sympathies ran out into new social forms almost with the fluid ease of the melted tallow which he had poured, in his boyhood, into his father's candle moulds; but of all the impressions that he ever derived from any society, that which was made upon him by French society certifies most strikingly to the wonderful plasticity of his nature, under the pressure of new conditions. So permeated did he—one of the truest progenitors of distinctively American ideas and attributes, and one of the truest exponents of the robust Anglo-Saxon character—become with the genius of the French People that a Frenchman, Henri Martin, the historian, has declared that he was "of a mind altogether French in its grace and elasticity."

There was a time, of course, when Franklin, apart from the inveteracy of the old English prejudice, which believed that upon every pair of English legs marched three Frenchmen, had no good blood for the French because of the agony in which they had for so many years, with the aid of their savage friends, kept the colonial frontier.

"I fancy that intriguing nation would like very well to meddle on occasion, and blow up the coals between Britain and her colonies; but I hope we shall give them no opportunity." This was his quiet comment even as late as 1767 in a letter to William Franklin upon the sedulous attentions recently paid to him by Monsieur Durand, the French plenipotentiary in London, whose masters were fully awake to the fact that the quarrel between Great Britain and her Colonies might be a pretty one from the point of view of French interests, and that in duels it is not the pistols but the seconds that kill. But this was politics. Long before Franklin crossed the Atlantic on his French mission, he had felt, during his visits to France in 1767 and 1769, the bewitching influence of social conditions perpetually enlivened and refreshed by the vivacity and inventive resource which were such conspicuous features of his own character. After his return from France in 1767, he wrote to D'Alibard: "The Time I spent in Paris, and in the improving Conversation and agreeable Society of so many learned and ingenious Men, seems now to me like a pleasing Dream, from which I was sorry to be awaked by finding myself again at London." These agreeable impressions were confirmed by his return to France in 1769. After stating in a letter to Dupont de Nemours in the succeeding year that he expected to return to America in the ensuing summer, he exclaimed, "Would to God I could take with me Messrs. Dupont, du Bourg, and some other French Friends with their good Ladies! I might then, by mixing them with my Friends in Philadelphia, form a little happy Society that would prevent my ever wishing again to visit Europe."

It was, therefore, to no entirely novel social conditions that Franklin was introduced when he found himself again in France in 1776. At any rate, no chameleon was ever quicker to absorb the color of his latest background.

As time elapsed, nothing but his inability to write and speak French with the facility of a native-born Frenchman separated him in a social sense from the mass of French men and women, by whom he was admired, courted and flattered almost from the day that he set foot in France until the day that he was conveyed in one of the Queen's litters to the coast on his return to America. How far this assimilation was the deliberate achievement of a wise man, who never failed to act upon the principle that the best way of managing men is to secure their good will first, how far but the unconscious self-adjustment of a pliable disposition it is impossible to say. But there can be no doubt about the amazing sympathy with which Franklin entered into the social life of the French people. Beneath the gay, pleasure-loving exterior that he presented to French society, there was always the thought of that land over-sea, so singularly blessed by Providence with material comfort and equality of fortune, with the general diffusion of education and enlightenment, and with political institutions bound to the past only by the wisdom of experience. Always beneath that exterior, too, was a glowing resentment of the wrongs that England had inflicted upon America, an enthusiastic sense of the "glorious cause" in which America was engaged, and a resolution as fixed as the eye of Nemesis that no hand but the hand of America itself should fill out the outlines of the imperial destiny, in which he had once been so eagerly, even pathetically, desirous that England should share. But these were thoughts and purposes reserved for the hours of business, or of confidential intercourse with his American compatriots, or for such moments as the one when he heard of the fall of Philadelphia and the surrender of Burgoyne. In his purely social relations with the French People, he preserved only enough of his republican ideas, dress and manners to give a certain degree of piquancy to his *ensemble*.

He adopted French usages and customs; he composed exquisite little stories and dialogues in the French manner, and, old as he was, he made love like a French *galant*. "As it is always fair Weather in our Parlours, it is at Paris always Peace," he wrote to the Chevalier de la Luzerne, and this remark comes home to us with full force when we remember with what unrestrained gaiety of heart, notwithstanding the shudder sent through him at times by the American War, he enjoyed the social life of Paris. Long before he left France, he had learnt to love the country and its people with a sincere, fervent attachment. After saying in a letter to Josiah Quincy, that the French had certainly advanced in politeness and civility many degrees beyond the English, he paid them this compliment:

I find them here a most amiable Nation to live with. The Spaniards are by common Opinion suppos'd to be cruel, the English proud, the Scotch insolent, the Dutch Avaricious, &c., but I think the French have no national Vice ascrib'd to them. They have some Frivolities, but they are harmless. To dress their Heads so that a Hat cannot be put on them, and then wear their Hats under their Arms, and to fill their Noses with Tobacco, may be called Follies, perhaps, but they are not Vices. They are only the effects of the tyranny of Custom. In short, there is nothing wanting in the Character of a Frenchman, that belongs to that of an agreeable and worthy Man. There are only some Trifles surplus, or which might be spared.

These, however, were but frigid words in comparison with those subsequently employed by him in relation to a country, where, to use his own language, everybody strove to make him happy. "The French are an amiable People to live with," he told his old friend, Captain Nathaniel Falconer, "They love me, & I love them." In a later letter to William Franklin, he said, "I am here

among a People that love and respect me, a most amiable Nation to live with; and perhaps I may conclude to die among them; for my Friends in America are dying off, one after another, and I have been so long abroad, that I should now be almost a Stranger in my own Country."

Nor did the love for France that he took back with him to the United States grow at all fainter with absence and the flow of time. To the Duc de la Rochefoucauld he wrote from Philadelphia, "I love France, I have 1000 Reasons for doing so: And whatever promotes or impedes her Happiness affects me as if she were my Mother." To Madame Lavoisier he used terms that communicate to us an even more vivid conception of the ambrosial years that he had passed in France.

> These [he said, referring to his good fortune in his old age in its different aspects] are the blessings of God, and depend on his continued goodness; yet all do not make me forget Paris, and the nine years' happiness I enjoyed there, in the sweet society of a people whose conversation is instructive, whose manners are highly pleasing, and who, above all the nations of the world, have, in the greatest perfection, the art of making themselves beloved by strangers. And now, even in my sleep, I find, that the scenes of all my pleasant dreams are laid in that city, or in its neighbourhood.[1]

Mingled with these pleasant dreams, it is safe to say were some of the lively and charming women to whose embraces he submitted, if his sister Jane was not misinformed, in a spirit quite remote from that of the rigors of penance.

> You mention the Kindness of the French Ladies to me [he wrote to Elizabeth Partridge, whose husband was the superintendent of the almshouse in Boston], I must explain that

[1] In a letter to Count de Moustiers, dated Philadelphia, Feb. 10, 1788, Franklin termed Louis XVI. and France "the best of Kings & the most beloved of Nations."

matter. This is the civilest nation upon Earth. Your first Acquaintances endeavour to find out what you like, and they tell others. If 'tis understood that you like Mutton, dine where you will you find Mutton. Somebody, it seems, gave it out that I lov'd Ladies; and then everybody presented me their Ladies (or the Ladies presented themselves) to be *embrac'd*, that is to have their Necks kiss'd. For as to kissing of Lips or Cheeks it is not the Mode here, the first, is reckon'd rude, & the other may rub off the Paint. The French Ladies have however 1000 other ways of rendering themselves agreeable; by their various Attentions and Civilities, & their sensible Conversation. 'Tis a delightful People to live with.

I hope, however [he wrote to another correspondent after denying a story about himself], to preserve, while I stay, the regard you mention of the French ladies; for their society and conversation, when I have time to enjoy them, are extremely agreeable.

And that the French ladies found his society and conversation extremely agreeable no one can well doubt who has had occasion to become familiar with the scented missives, full of artful coquetry, that were addressed by many fair hands to "très cher papa," or "Dear American papa" or "amiable papa," when he was in the land where somebody had been so considerate as to give it out that he liked ladies. At times, these notes run along in mingled French and English as if the writers were determined to bring to bear upon him the blandishments not only of the former language but of his own familiar tongue besides. "Je vous envoye a sweet kiss, dear Papa, envoyez moi en revanche, un Mot de Réponse," was one languishing request. Even Franklin's bad French mattered but little when a woman, Madame Brillon, whom the daughter of Abigail Adams pronounced "one of the handsomest women in France," could write to him, "It is always very good French to say, 'Je vous aime.'

My heart always goes out to meet this word when you say it to me." From such words as these to his saying that the best master of languages is a mistress the transition was not very difficult.[1]

It was at Passy, then a suburb of Paris, that Franklin resided during the eight and a half years that he was one of our representatives in France. His surroundings were thus described by him in reply to a question from Mrs. Stevenson:

> You wish to know how I live. It is in a fine House, situated in a neat Village, on high Ground, half a Mile from Paris, with a large Garden to walk in. I have abundance of Acquaintance, dine abroad Six days in seven. Sundays I reserve to dine at home, with such Americans as pass this Way; and I then have my grandson Ben, with some other American Children from his school.

The house mentioned by Franklin was known as the Basse Cour de Monsieur Le Ray de Chaumont, and had originally, with the inscription over its door, "Se sta bene, non si muove" not been unknown to fame as the Hôtel de Valentinois. Indeed, John Locke, who visited Paris in 1679, declared that it was among the twenty-four *belles maisons* in Paris that best rewarded the curiosity of the stranger at that time. The circumstances, under which it passed into the possession of Franklin, were another proof of the flaming zeal with which many of the foremost inhabitants of France espoused the cause of the Colonies. Chaumont was Grand Maître des Eaux et Forets de France and Intendant Honoraire des Invalides, a friend

[1] Franklin was too old when he entered upon the French mission to acquire a real mastery of the French language. On one occasion, when at the theatre with Madame de Boufflers, from whom he took his cue in helping to swell the plaudits of the evening, he was chagrined to find that his most vigorous applause had been bestowed on flattering allusions to himself.

of the Duc de Choiseul, and a man of large wealth, with a château on the Loire as well as the mansion at Passy, of which the building occupied by Franklin was a part. In his generous enthusiasm for American liberty, he declined a post in the French Ministry, offered to him by Choiseul, because he thought that by declining it he might be a more useful intermediary between America and the French Government. When John Adams came to Passy, and found a home under the same roof with Franklin, he felt obliged to write to Chaumont asking him to consider what rent they should pay to him for the use of his house and furniture. Every part of Chaumont's conduct towards him and Americans in general, and in all their affairs, he said, had been polite and obliging, as far as he had an opportunity of observing, and he had no doubt it would continue, but it was not reasonable that they should occupy such an elegant mansion without any compensation to the owner, and it was not right that they should live at too great or at too uncertain an expense to their constituents. The reply of Chaumont was worthy of a paladin of Ancient France. "When I consecrated my home to Dr. Franklin and his associates who might live with him," he said, "I made it fully understood that I should expect no compensation, because I perceived that you had need of all your means to send to the succor of your country, or to relieve the distresses of your countrymen escaping from the chains of their enemies." This is a world, however, in which it is too much to expect an absolutely free gift of house rent, and the answer of Chaumont to John Adams does not altogether agree with the version of the matter given by Franklin in a letter to Robert R. Livingston, in which he said that Chaumont had originally proposed to leave the article of rent unsettled until the end of the war, and then to accept for it a piece of American land from the Congress such as they might judge equivalent. Considering the serious un-

certainty as to whether there would then be any Congress, this was quite generous enough. It is painful to relate, however, that Chaumont engaged so recklessly in the hazardous business of shipping supplies to America for the patriot army as to become involved in pecuniary embarrassments, which produced some degree of temporary constraint in his intercourse with Franklin. "I find that in these Affairs with him, a Bargain tho' ever so clearly express'd signifies nothing," wrote Franklin in a moment of disgust with his volatility to Jonathan Williams. A few months before, Franklin had made this entry in a journal kept by him during a brief portion of his residence at Passy. "Visit at M. de Chaumont's in the evening; found him cold and dry." But before Franklin left France, the old cordiality of intercourse appears to have been fully re-established, for we find the two dining with each other again, and besides, when Franklin was on his way to the seacoast, on his return to America, Chaumont and his daughter accompanied him part of the way. The entire restoration of good feeling between the two men is also shown in the letters and conduct of Franklin after his return to America. Chaumont was one of the group of French friends favored by him with gifts of the Franklin Myrtle Wax Soap, "thought," he said, "to be the best in the World, for Shaving & for washing Chinces, and other things of delicate Colours." In one of his letters from Philadelphia, Franklin tells Chaumont that Donatien Le Ray Chaumont, the Younger, who had come over to America to press certain claims of the elder Chaumont against the United States, was out at that time with his "son Bache" and some others on a hunt. It is in this letter, by the way, that he said of Finck, his *maître d' hôtel* at Passy, who was pretending that he was not wholly paid, "He was continually saying of himself, Je suis honnête homme, Je suis honnête homme. But I always suspected he was mistaken; and so it proves."

In another letter, he wrote to Chaumont, "I have frequently the Pleasure of seeing your valuable Son, whom I love as my own," and in this letter he sent his love to all Chaumont's children in France, one of whom he was in the habit of addressing as "ma femme," another as "ma chère amie," and still another as "mon enfant." "Present my affectionate Respects to Madame de Chaumont, and Love to Mad^{e} Foucault, to ma Femme, m^{a} chere Amie, et mon Enfant," was one of his messages to Chaumont. This Madame Foucault was the favorite mentioned by William Temple Franklin, when he wrote to his grandfather some nine months after the latter found the manner of Chaumont "cold and dry," "All the family (the Chaumonts) send their love to you, and the beautiful M^{e} Foucault accompanys hers with an English kiss." A challenge of that kind was always promptly caught up by Franklin. "Thanks to Mad^{e} Foucault," he replied, "for her kindness in sending me the Kiss. It was grown cold by the way. I hope for a warm one when we meet."

An amusing observation of Madame Chaumont, which has its value, as an illustration of eighteenth-century manners in France, is quoted in a letter from Franklin to John Paul Jones:

> L'Abbé Rochon had just been telling me & Madame Chaumont [wrote Franklin] that the old Gardiner & his Wife had complained to the Curate, of your having attack'd her in the Garden about 7 o'clock the evening before your Departure, and attempted to ravish her relating all the Circumstances, some of which are not fit for me to write. The serious Part of it was y^{t} three of her Sons were determin'd to kill you, if you had not gone off; the Rest occasioned some Laughing; for the old Woman being one of the grossest, coarsest, dirtiest & ugliest that we may find in a thousand, Madame Chaumont said it gave a high Idea of the Strength of Appetite & Courage of the Americans. A Day or two after, I learnt y^{t} it was the

femme de Chambre of Mademoiselle Chaumont who had disguis'd herself in a Suit, I think, of your Cloaths, to divert herself under that Masquerade, as is customary the last evening of Carnival: and that meeting the old Woman in the Garden, she took it into her Head to try her Chastity, which it seems was found Proof.

The wit of Madame de Chaumont, however, shows to better advantage in connection with another incident. One of Franklin's friends was Mademoiselle Passy, a beautiful girl, whom he was in the habit of calling, so John Adams tells us, "his favorite, and his flame, and his love," which flattered the family, and did not displease the young lady. When her engagement to the Marquis de Tonnerre was announced, Madame de Chaumont exclaimed to Franklin, "Hélas! tous les conducteurs de Monsieur Franklin n'ont pas empêché le tonnerre de tomber sur Mademoiselle de Passy." Franklin himself was entirely too good a conductor of wit not to pass a thing like this on.

It gives me great Pleasure Madam my respected Neighbour, [he said in a letter to Madame de Boulainvilliers, the mother of the Semele upon whom the Marquis was about to descend] to learn that our lovely Child is soon to be married with your Approbation & that we are not however to be immediately depriv'd of her Company. I assure you I shall make no Use of my Paratonnerre [lightning-rod] to prevent this Match.

Franklin's republican simplicity began and ended with his unpowdered hair, worn straight, and covered with a cap of marten fur, and his russet dress. At Passy, he lived in a manner that Vergennes, accustomed to the splendor and profusion of European Courts, might well call modest, but which was quite as lavish as was consistent with the reputation of a plain democrat or of a veritable philosopher. Under the terms of his contract with his

maître d'hôtel. the latter was to provide *déjeuner* and dinner daily for five persons. The *déjeuner* was to consist of bread and butter, honey, and coffee or chocolate with sugar, and the dinner of a joint of beef, or veal or mutton, followed by fowl or game with "deux plats d'entremets, deux plats de legumes, et un plat de Pattisserie, avec hors d'œuvre, de Beurres, cornichons, radis, etᶜ." For dessert, there were to be "deux de Fruit en hiver et 4 en Eté." There were also to be at dinner: "Deux compottes, un assiette de fromage, un de Biscuits, et un de bonbons," and "Des Glaces, 2 fois par Semaine en Eté et un fois en Hyver." The cost of this service per month was 720 livres. There was also an allowance of 240 livres per month for nine domestic servants, and of 400 livres per month for extra dinners for guests; making the total monthly cost of Franklin's table 1360 livres. And there was no lack of good wine, red or white, *ordinaire* or *extra-ordinaire.* In 1778, there were 1180 bottles of wine and rum in the cellar at Passy, and, some four and one half years later, there were 1203. Franklin also maintained a carriage and coachman at a cost of 5018 livres per year. By a resolution of Congress, the salaries of the different Commissioners of the United States in Europe were fixed at 11,428 livres tournois per annum, in addition to their reasonable expenses, and the total expenses of Franklin in France are computed by Smyth to have been about $15,000 per annum, a moderate sum, indeed, in comparison with the amount necessary to sustain the dignity of our Minister to France at the present time. Nevertheless, the *ménage* at Passy was luxurious enough for him to be warned that it had been described at home by some of his guests in such terms as to provoke popular censure on the part of his countrymen.

They must be contented for the future [Franklin said in a letter to John Adams] as I am, with plain beef and pudding.

The readers of Connecticut newspapers ought not to be troubled for any more accounts of our extravagance. For my own part, if I could sit down to dinner on a piece of excellent salt pork and pumpkin, I would not give a farthing for all the luxuries of Paris.

After this time, Franklin did not keep such an open house as before, considerably to the relief of his gout. Previously, if we may believe John Adams, he had made a practice of inviting everybody to dine with him on Sunday at Passy. Sometimes, his company was made up exclusively, or all but exclusively, of Americans, and sometimes partly of Americans, and partly of French, and, now and then, there was an Englishman or so. Miss Adams mentions a "sumptuous dinner," at which the members of the Adams family, the Marquis de la Fayette and his wife, Lord Mount Morris, an Irish Volunteer, Dr. Jeffries, and Paul Jones were guests. Another dinner is mentioned by her at which all the guests were Americans, except M. Brillon, who had dropped in, he said, "à demander un diné à Père Franklin." A whimsical story is told by Jefferson of still another dinner at which one half of the guests were Americans and one half French.

Among the last [he says] was the Abbé (Raynal). During the dinner he got on his favorite theory of the degeneracy of animals, and even of men, in America, and urged it with his usual eloquence. The Doctor at length noticing the accidental stature and position of his guests, at table, "Come," says he, "M. L'Abbé, let us try this question by the fact before us. We are here one half Americans, and one half French, and it happens that the Americans have placed themselves on one side of the table, and our French friends are on the other. Let both parties rise, and we will see on which side nature has degenerated." It happened that his American guests were Carmichael, Harmer, Humphreys, and others of the finest stature and form; while those of the other side were remarkably diminutive, and the Abbé himself, particularly, was a

mere shrimp. He parried the appeal, however, by a complimentary admission of exceptions, among which the Doctor himself was a conspicuous one.

Not the least interesting of the guests that Franklin drew around his table at Passy were lads, who had a claim upon his notice, either because they were the sons, or grandsons, of friends of his, or because they were friends of his grandson, Benjamin Franklin Bache. In a letter to Doctor Cooper, Franklin tells him that his grandson, Samuel Cooper Johonnot appeared a very promising lad, in whom he thought that the doctor would have much satisfaction, and was well on the preceding Sunday, when he had had the pleasure of his company to dinner with Mr. Adams' sons, and some other young Americans. There is still in existence a letter from John Quincy Adams, then a boy of eleven, to Franklin, which indicates that the latter had quite won his heart, though, do what he might, he could never win the heart of the elder Adams.

It was a brilliant society, to which Franklin was introduced, after the first reserve of the French Court, before its recognition of American independence, was laid aside. He had the magpie habit of hoarding every scrap of paper or cardboard, that bore the imprint of his existence, and Smyth, the latest editor of Franklin's works, has, with his usual diligence, compiled the names that appear most frequently on the visiting cards, found among Franklin's papers. They are such significant names as those of La Duchesse d'Enville, her son Le Duc de la Rochefoucauld, M. Turgot, Duc de Chaulnes, Comte de Crillon, Vicomte de Sarsfield, M. Brisson, of the Royal Academy of Sciences, Comte de Milly, Prince des Deuxponts, Comte d'Estaing, Marquis de Mirabeau and M. Beaugeard, Treasurer of the State of Brittany.

The Diary of John Adams reveals Franklin and himself dining on one occasion with La Duchesse d'Enville, and

"twenty of the great people of France," on another with M. Chalut, one of the farmers-general, and the old Marshal Richelieu, and "a vast number of other great company," on another with the Prince de Tingry, Duc de Beaumont, of the illustrious House of Montmorency, and on another with La Duchesse d'Enville, along with her daughter and grand-daughter, and dukes, abbots and the like so numerous that the list ends with a splutter of et ceteras. "Dukes, and bishops and counts, etc." are the overburdened words with which Adams closes his list of the guests at a dinner given by Vergennes, the minister of Louis XVI.

But, after all, it was the circle of intimate friends, to which Franklin promised to introduce John Jay on the arrival of Jay in France, that constitutes the chief interest of the former's social life in France. Three of these friends were Madame Helvétius, Madame Brillon and the Comtesse d'Houdetot. With Madame Helvétius, he dined every Saturday at Auteuil, with Madame Brillon twice a week at the home of her husband, not far from his, and with the Comtesse d'Houdetot frequently at Sanois, in the Valley of Montmorency. Madame Helvétius was known to her friends as "Our Lady of Auteuil." She was the widow of Helvétius, the philosopher, who had left her a handsome fortune, amassed by him when one of the farmers-general. In testimony of her affection for him, she kept under glass, on a table in her bedroom, a monument erected to his memory, with his picture hung above it. Her *salon* was one of the best-known in France, and it was maintained on such a sumptuous scale that, in one of his letters, after his return to America, Franklin told her that often in his dreams he placed himself by her side on one of her thousand sofas. It was at Auteuil that he passed some of his happiest hours in France, plying its mistress with flattery and badinage, and enjoying the music of her two daughters, known to the household as

"the Stars," and the conversation of her friends, the younger Cabanis, and the Abbés Morellet and de la Roche. One of the amusements of the inner circle at Auteuil was to read aloud to each other little trifles, full of point and grace which they had composed. Thus, though after Franklin had returned to America, was ushered into the world the Abbé Morellet's *Very Humble Petition to Madame Helvétius from her Cats*—animals which appear to have had a position in her home as assured as that of "the Stars" or the Abbés themselves; and several of the wittiest of the productions, which Franklin called his Bagatelles, originated in the same way. If homage, seasoned with delightful humor and wit, could have kept the mistress of Auteuil, at the age of sixty, from incurring the malice of the female contemporary, who, we are told by Miss Adams, compared her with the ruins of Palmyra, that of Franklin would assuredly have done it. When she complained that he had not been to see her for a long time, he evaded the reproach of absence by replying, "I am waiting, Madame, until the nights are longer." Whatever others might think, she was to him, "his fair friend at Auteuil," who still possessed "health and personal charms." What cleverer application could there be than this of the maxim of Hesiod that the half is sometimes more than the whole:

> Very dear Friend, we shall have some good music tomorrow morning at breakfast. Can you give me the pleasure of sharing in it. The time will be half past ten. This is a problem that a mathematician will experience some trouble in explaining; In sharing other things, each of us has only one portion; but in sharing pleasures with you, my portion is doubled. The part is more than the whole.

On another occasion, when Madame Helvétius reminded Franklin that she expected to meet him at Turgot's, he replied, "Mr. Franklin never forgets any party at which

Madame Helvétius is expected. He even believes that, if he were engaged to go to Paradise this morning, he would pray for permission to remain on earth until half-past one, to receive the embrace promised him at the Turgots."

Poor Deborah seems altogether lost, and forgotten when we read these lines that he wrote to the Abbé de la Roche:

I have often remarked, when reading the works of M. Helvétius, that, although we were born and reared in two countries so remote from each other, we have frequently had the same thoughts; and it is a reflection very flattering to me that we have loved the same studies, and, as far as we have both known them, the same friends, and the same woman.

But the image of Deborah was not so completely effaced from Franklin's memory that he could not conjure up her shade for a moment to excite a retaliatory impulse in the breast which he had found insensible to his proposals of marriage, serious, or affected. If Madame Helvétius, who was illiterate like Deborah, did not appreciate the light, aërial humor of the following dream from the pen of the author of *The Art of Procuring Pleasant Dreams*, we may be sure that her witty Abbés did:

Mortified by your cruel resolution, declared by you so positively yesterday evening, to remain single the rest of your life, out of respect for your dear husband, I retired to my home, threw myself upon my bed, and dreamt that I was dead and in the Elysian Fields.

I was asked whether I wished to see any persons in particular. "Conduct me to the philosophers," I replied. "There are two who live here close by in this garden; they are very good neighbors and very friendly with each other," I was told. "Who are they?" "Socrates and Helvétius." "I esteem them both immensely, but let me see Helvétius first, because I understand a little French, but not a word of Greek." He received me with much courtesy, having known me, he said, by reputation for some time past. He asked me a

thousand questions about the war, the present state of religion, of liberty, and politics in France. "You do not ask me then," I said, "anything about your dear *amie*, Madame Helvétius; yet she loves you still exceedingly, and I was at her home only an hour ago." "Ah," said he, "you bring back to me my past happiness, but it must be forgotten to be happy here. During several of my first years here, I thought only of her, but at length I am consoled. I have taken another wife, one as much like her as I could find. She is not, it is true, quite so handsome, but she has as much good sense, and much *esprit*, and she loves me infinitely. Her continuous aim is to please me, and she is at this moment gone to look up the best nectar and ambrosia to regale me with this evening; stay here awhile, and you will see her." "I perceive," said I, "that your former *amie* is more faithful than you are; for she has had several good offers, but has refused them all. I confess that I myself have loved her to distraction, but she was obdurate, and has rejected me peremptorily for love of you." "I pity your misfortune," said he, "for in truth she is a good and handsome woman, and very lovable." "But are not the Abbé de la R—and the Abbé M—still sometimes at her house?" "Yes, to be sure, for she has not lost a single one of your friends." "If you had induced the Abbé M—(with some good coffee and cream) to say a word for you, you would, perhaps, have succeeded; for he is as subtle a reasoner as Duns Scotus or St. Thomas; he marshals his arguments in such good order that they become almost irresistible. And if the Abbé de la R—had been induced (by some fine edition of an old classic) to say a word against you, that would have been better; for I have always observed that when he advised her to do anything she had a very strong inclination to do the reverse." As he was saying this, the new Madame Helvétius entered with the nectar, and I recognized her instantly as my former American *amie*, Mrs. Franklin. I laid claim to her but she said to me coldly: "I was a good wife to you for forty-nine years and four months, almost a half century; be content with that. I have formed a new connection here which will last to eternity." Indignant at this refusal of my Eurydice, I at once resolved to quit those ungrateful

shades, and to return to this good world, and to gaze again upon the sun and you. Here I am; let us avenge ourselves.

It is an animated picture, too, that Franklin strikes off of Our Lady of Auteuil in a letter to Cabanis, when the latter had been absent for a time from Auteuil:

We often talk of you at Auteuil, where everybody loves you. I now and then offend our good lady who can not long retain her displeasure, but, sitting in state on her sopha, extends graciously her long, handsome arm, and says "la; baisez ma main: Je vous pardonne," with all the dignity of a sultaness. She is as busy as ever, endeavoring to make every creature about her happy, from the Abbés down thro' all ranks of the family to the birds and Poupon.

Poupon was one of the fair lady's eighteen cats. This letter ends with the request that Cabanis present to his father the writer's thanks to him for having gotten so valuable a son.

A lively note to Cabanis is in the same vein:

M. Franklin risen, washed, shaved, combed, beautified to the highest degree, of which he is capable, entirely dressed, and on the point of going out, with his head full of the four Mesdames Helvétius, and of the sweet kisses that he proposes to snatch from them, is much mortified to find the possibility of this happiness being put off until next Sunday. He will exercise as much patience as he can, hoping to see one of these ladies at the home of M. de Chaumont Wednesday. He will be there in good time to see her enter with that grace and dignity which charmed him so much seven weeks ago in the same place. He even plans to seize her there, and to keep her at his home for the rest of her life. His remaining three Mesdames Helvétius at Auteuil can suffice for the canaries and the Abbés.

Another note to Cabanis illustrates how readily pleasantry of this kind ran in the eighteenth century into gross license:

M. Franklin is sorry to have caused the least hurt to those beautiful tresses that he always regards with pleasure. If that Lady likes to pass her days with him, he would like as much to pass his nights with her; and since he has already given many of his days to her, although he had such a small remnant of them to give, she would seem ungrateful to have never given him a single one of her nights, which run continually to pure waste, without promoting the good fortune of any one except Poupon.

When the reader is told that this letter ended with the words, "to be shown to our Lady of Auteuil," his mind is not unprepared for the graphic description by Abigail Adams of a dinner at which Madame Helvétius was the central figure:

She entered the room with a careless, jaunty air; upon seeing ladies who were strangers to her, she bawled out, "Ah, mon Dieu, where is Franklin? Why did you not tell me there were ladies here?" You must suppose her speaking all this in French. "How I look!" said she, taking hold of a chemise made of tiffany, which she had on over a blue lutestring, and which looked as much upon the decay as her beauty, for she was once a handsome woman; her hair was frizzled; over it she had a small straw hat, with a dirty gauze half-handkerchief round it, and a bit of dirtier gauze than ever my maids wore was bowed on behind. She had a black gauze scarf thrown over her shoulders. She ran out of the room; when she returned, the Doctor entered at one door, she at the other; upon which she ran forward to him, caught him by the hand, "Hélas! Franklin;" then gave him a double kiss, one upon each cheek, and another upon his forehead. When we went into the room to dine, she was placed between the Doctor and Mr. Adams. She carried on the chief of the conversation at dinner, frequently locking her hands into the Doctor's, and sometimes spreading her arms upon the backs of both the gentlemen's chairs, then throwing her arm carelessly upon the Doctor's neck.

I should have been greatly astonished at this conduct, if

the good Doctor had not told me that in this lady I should see a genuine Frenchwoman, wholly free from affectation or stiffness of behaviour, and one of the best women in the world. For this I must take the Doctor's word; but I should have set her down for a very bad one, although sixty years of age, and a widow. I own I was highly disgusted, and never wish for an acquaintance with any ladies of this cast. After dinner, she threw herself upon a settee, where she showed more than her feet. She had a little lapdog, who was, next to the Doctor, her favorite. This she kissed, and when he wet the floor she wiped it up with her chemise. This is one of the Doctor's most intimate friends, with whom he dines once every week, and she with him. She is rich, and is my near neighbour; but I have not yet visited her. Thus you see, my dear, that manners differ exceedingly in different countries. I hope however, to find among the French ladies manners more consistent with my ideas of decency, or I shall be a mere recluse.

This, of course, in part, was but the New England snowdrop expressing its disapproval of the full-blown red rose of France, but it is impossible for all the pigments in the picture, painted by the skilful hand of Abigail Adams, to have been supplied by the moral austerity of Puritanism. Miss Adams, we might add, followed up her mother's impression with a prim ditto in her journal: "Dined at Mr. Franklin's by invitation; a number of gentlemen and Madame Helvétius, a French lady sixty years of age. Odious indeed do our sex appear when divested of those ornaments, with which modesty and delicacy adorn us." But we suspect that the Doctor was right in saying that Madame Helvétius, free and tawdry as she seemed to Abigail Adams and her daughter, was one of the best women in the world; that is to say her world. We are told that, when she was convalescing from an illness, four hundred persons assembled at Auteuil to express the pleasure they felt at the prospect of her recovery. Beneath the noisy, lax manners, which Mrs. Adams deline-

ates so mercilessly, there must have been another and a very different Madame Helvétius to have won such a tribute as the following from a man who had known what it was to be tenderly beloved by more than one pure, thoroughly refined and accomplished woman:

> And now I mention your friends, let me tell you, that I have in my way been trying to form some hypothesis to account for your having so many, and of such various kinds. I see that statesmen, philosophers, historians, poets, and men of learning of all sorts are drawn around you, and seem as willing to attach themselves to you as straws about a fine piece of amber. It is not that you make pretensions to any of their sciences; and if you did, similarity of studies does not always make people love one another. It is not that you take pains to engage them; artless simplicity is a striking part of your character. I would not attempt to explain it by the story of the ancient, who, being asked why philosophers sought the acquaintance of kings, and kings not that of philosophers, replied that philosophers knew what they wanted, which was not always the case with kings. Yet thus far the comparison may go, that we find in your sweet society that charming benevolence, that amiable attention to oblige, that disposition to please and be pleased, which we do not always find in the society of one another. It springs from you; it has its influence on us all, and in your company we are not only pleased with you, but better pleased with one another and ourselves.

There can be no doubt that the friendship between the two was a real, genuine sentiment. When Franklin was doubting whether he was not too old and decrepit to cross the Atlantic, she was one of the three friends who urged him to spend his last days in France, and live with them. It was hardly fair, therefore, when she exclaimed after the departure of Franklin from France, in the presence of Madame Brillon, "Ah, that great man, that dear man, we shall see him no more," for Madame Brillon to retort, "It is entirely your fault, Madame."

From Havre he sent back tender farewells to his "très chere amie." They were awaiting, he said, their baggage and fellow-voyager, Mr. Houdon, the sculptor. "When they come, we shall quit France, the country of the world that I love the best; and I shall leave there my dear Helvetia. She can be happy there. I am not sure of being happy in America; but it is necessary for me to go there. Things seem to me to be badly arranged here below, when I see beings so well constituted to be happy together compelled to separate." Then after a message of friendship to "the Abbés the good Abbés," the *vale* dies out in these fond words: "I do not tell you that I love you. I might be told that there was nothing strange or meritorious in that, because the whole world loves you. I only hope that you will always love me a little."

Nor did the separation worked by the Atlantic produce any change in these feelings. In the letters written by Franklin to Madame Helvétius, and the members of her circle, after his return to Philadelphia, there is the same spirit of affection for her and for them, as well as a wistful retrospect of his chats with her on her thousand sofas, his walks with her in her garden, and the repasts at her table, always seasoned by sound sense, sprightliness and friendship. One of his commissions seems to have been to obtain a cardinal red bird for the "good dame," as he calls her in a letter to the Abbé Morellet from Philadelphia. "The good Dame, whom we all love, and whose Memory I shall love and honour as long as I have any Existence," were his words. But the commission was difficult of execution. The Virginia cardinal, he wrote to the Abbé, was a tender bird that stood the sea but poorly. Several sent out to France for their dame by Mr. Alexander, in his tobacco ships, had never arrived, he understood, and, "unless a Friend was going in the Ship who would take more than common Care of them,"

he supposed, "one might send an hundred without landing one alive."

> They would be very happy, I know [he said], if they were once under her Protection; but they cannot come to her, and she will not come to them. She may remember the Offer I made her of 1,000 Acres of Woodland, out of which she might cut a great Garden and have 1,000 Aviaries if she pleased. I have a large Tract on the Ohio where Cardinals are plenty. If I had been a Cardinal myself perhaps I might have prevail'd with her.

In his efforts to transport the Cardinal, Franklin even enlisted the services of Mr. Paradise, who, if contemporary gossip is reliable, might well have pleaded the preoccupation imposed upon him of protecting himself from the beak of his own termagant wife. Madame Helvétius, however, was not so eager for a cardinal as not to be willing to wait until one could be brought over by a proper escort. "I am in no hurry at all," she wrote to Franklin; "I will wait; for I am not willing to be the death of these pretty creatures. I will wait." In this same letter, there is an amusing mixture of tenderness and banter. Declining health and advancing years, she said, would but enable them the sooner to meet again as well as to meet again those whom they had loved, she a husband and he a wife; "but I believe," she wipes the moisture from her eyes long enough to say, "that you who have been a rogue (*coquin*) will be restored to more than one."

From what we have said, it is plain enough that the friendship felt by Madame Helvétius for the Abbés Morellet and de la Roche was shared by Franklin. When he touched at Southampton, after leaving Havre, on his return to America, he wafted another fond farewell to Madame Helvétius; "I will always love you," he said, "think of me sometimes, and write sometimes to your B. F." This letter, too, contained the usual waggish

reference to the Abbés. "Adieu, my very, very, very dear amie. Wish us a good voyage, and tell the good Abbés to pray for us, since that is their profession." The *Very Humble Petition to Madame Helvétius from her Cats* was long ascribed to Franklin, but it was really written by the Abbé Morellet. After reading it, Franklin wrote to the Abbé that the rapidity, with which the good lady's eighteen cats were increasing, would, in time, make their cause insupportable, and that their friends should, therefore, advise them to submit voluntarily either to transportation or castration. How deeply the Abbé Morellet was attached to Franklin is feelingly revealed in the letters which he wrote to him after the latter had arrived safely in America; to say nothing of the Abbé's Memoirs.

May your days [he wrote in one of these letters] be prolonged and be free from pain; may your friends long taste the sweetness and the charm of your society, and may those whom the seas have separated from you be still happy in the thought that the end of your career will be, as our good La Fontaine says, "the evening of a fine day."

Then, after some political reflections, suggested by the liberal institutions of America, the Abbé indulges in a series of gay comments on the habit that their Lady of Auteuil had, in her excessive love of coffee, of robbing him of his share of the cream, on the vicious bulldog brought over by Temple to France from England and on the host of cats, that had multiplied in the woodhouse and woodyard at Auteuil, under the patronage of their mistress, and did nothing but keep their paws in their furred gowns, and warm themselves in the sun. Friends of liberty, these cats, the Abbé said, were entirely out of place under the governments of Europe. Nothing could be more suitable than to load a small vessel with them

and ship them to America. Another letter from the Abbé concluded with these heartfelt words:

> I shall never forget the happiness I have enjoyed in knowing you, and seeing you intimately. I write to you from Auteuil, seated in your arm-chair, on which I have engraved, *Benjamin Franklin hic sedebat*, and having by my side the little bureau, which you bequeathed to me at parting, with a drawer full of nails to gratify the love of nailing and hammering, which I possess in common with you. But believe me, I have no need of all these helps to cherish your endeared *remembrance*, and to love you,
>
> "Dum memor ipse mei, dum spiritus hos reget artus."

During their jolly intercourse in France, the Abbé Morellet and Franklin touched glasses in two highly convivial productions. On one of the anniversaries of the birth of Franklin, or of American liberty, the Abbé could not remember which, the Abbé composed a drinking song in honor of Franklin, and among the letters written by Franklin when he was in France was one to the Abbé in which wine is lauded in terms of humorous exaggeration. One of the verses of the Abbé's production refers to the American War, and has been translated in these words by Parton:

> "Never did mankind engage
> In a war with views more sage;
> They seek freedom with design,
> To drink plenty of French wine;
> Such has been
> The intent of Benjamin."

The other verses are no better and no worse, and the whole poem is even more inferior in wit to Franklin's letter to the Abbé than the *Very Humble Petition to Madame Helvétius from her Cats*, clever though it be, is to Franklin's *Journey to the Elysian Fields*. If we

had nothing but these bibulous productions to judge by, we might infer that love of wine, quite as much as love of Madame Helvétius was the tie of connection between the Abbé Morellet and Franklin. Indeed, in the letter to Franklin with respect to the cats, the Abbé was quite as candid about expressing his partiality for one form of spirits as Franklin was in his unblushing eulogy of wine. He did not know, he said, what duties his cats, in the unsettled condition of the commercial relations between France and the United States, would be made to pay on arriving at Philadelphia; "and then," he continued, "if my vessel should find nothing to load with among you but grain, it could not touch at our islands to take in sugar, or to bring me back good rum either, which I love much."

When the Abbé de la Roche made a gift to Franklin of a volume of Helvétius' poems, Franklin was quick to give him a recompense in the form of a little drinking song which he had composed some forty years before. The plan of this poem is for the chorus, whenever the singer dwells upon any other source of gratification, to insist so vociferously upon friends and a bottle as the highest as finally to drown the singer out, so to speak.

Thus:

SINGER

"Fair Venus calls; her voice obey,
In beauty's arms spend night and day.
The joys of love all joys excel,
And loving's certainly doing well.

CHORUS

"Oh! no!
Not so!
For honest souls know,
Friends and a bottle still bear the bell."

In a letter to William Carmichael, enclosing his brilliant little bagatelle, *The Ephemera*, Franklin described Madame Brillon in these terms:

The person to whom it was addressed is Madame Brillon, a lady of most respectable character and pleasing conversation; mistress of an amiable family in this neighbourhood, with which I spend an evening twice in every week. She has, among other elegant accomplishments, that of an excellent musician; and, with her daughters, who sing prettily, and some friends who play, she kindly entertains me and my grand son with little concerts, a cup of tea, and a game of chess. I call this *my Opera*, for I rarely go to the Opera at Paris.

Madame Brillon was the wife of a public functionary much older than herself, who yet, as her own letters to Franklin divulge, did not feel that strict fidelity to her was necessary to soften the difference in their ages.

My father [she wrote on one occasion to Franklin], marriage in this country is made by weight of gold. On one end of the scale is placed the fortune of a boy, on the other that of a girl; when equality is found the affair is ended to the satisfaction of the relatives. One does not dream of consulting taste, age, congeniality of character; one marries a young girl whose heart is full of youth's fire and its cravings to a man who has used them up; then one exacts that this woman be virtuous—my friend, this story is mine, and of how many others! I shall do my best that it may not be that of my daughters, but alas, shall I be mistress of their fate?

The correspondence between Madame Brillon and Franklin was very voluminous. Among the Franklin papers in the possession of the American Philosophical Society, there are no less than 119 letters from her to him, and in the same collection there are also the rough drafts of some of his letters in French to her. More than one of them are marked with corrections by her hand.

Repeated statements of hers show that she took a very indulgent view of his imperfect mastery of the French language. When he sent to the Brillons his French translation of his *Dialogue between the Gout and M. Franklin*, she returned it to him, "corrected and made worse in several particulars by a savant, and devoted to destruction by the critical notes of a woman who is no savant," and she took occasion at the same time to say:

> Your dialogue has greatly amused me, but your corrector of French has spoiled your work. Believe me, leave your productions as they are, use words which mean something, and laugh at the grammarians who enfeeble all your phrases with their purisms. If I had the brains, I should utter a dire diatribe against those who dare to touch you up, even if it were the Abbé de la Roche, or my neighbor Veillard.

And after reading *The Whistle* of Franklin, she wrote to him, "M. Brillon has laughed heartily over the Whistle: we find that what you call your bad French often gives a piquant flavor to your narrative by reason of a certain turn of phraseology and the words you invent."

It may well be doubted whether there is anything more brilliant in literary history than the letters which make up the correspondence between Madame Brillon and Franklin, and the marvel is that the intellectual quality of his letters should, in every respect, be as distinctly French as that of hers. His easy, fleeting touch, his unflagging vivacity, his wit, his fertility of invention, his amative coloring are all as thoroughly French as bonbons or champagne. The tame domesticity of his forty-nine years of sober American wedlock, the calm, well-regulated flow of his thoughts and habits in conservative England, under the roof of Mrs. Stevenson, and at the country seat of the "Good Bishop," the Philosophy of Poor Richard, the Art of Virtue, are exchanged for a character which, except when a suitable match was to be

found for M. Franklinet, as Madame Brillon called William Temple Franklin, apparently took no account of anything but the pursuit of pleasure, as pleasure was pursued by the people, who have, of all others, most nearly succeeded in giving to it the rank of a respectable divinity. In all the letters of Franklin to Madame Brillon, there is not a sentiment with a characteristic American or English inflection in it. How far his approaches to the beautiful and clever wife of M. Brillon were truly erotic, and how far merely the conventional courtship of a gifted but aged man, who had survived everything, that belongs to passion but its language, it is impossible to say. We only know that, if his gallantry was specious merely, he maintained it with a degree of pertinacity, which there is only too much reason to believe might have had a different issue if it had been more youthful and genuine. A handsome, talented Frenchwoman, of the eighteenth century, burdened with a faithless husband, not too old for the importunity of a heart full, to use her own expression, of youth's fire and cravings, and tolerant enough to sit on an admirer's knees, and to write responsive replies to letters from him, accompanied by a perpetual refrain of sexuality, would, to say the least, have been in considerable danger of forgetting her marriage vows if her Colin had been younger. As it was, the tenderness of Madame Brillon for her "cher Papa" appears to have produced no results worse than a series of letters from her pen, as finished as enamel, which show that in every form of defensive warfare, literary or amorous, she was quite a match for the great man, who was disposed to forget how long he had lingered in a world which has nothing but a laugh for the efforts of December to pass itself off as May.

"Do you know, my dear Papa," she wrote to him on one occasion, "that people have criticized my pleasant habit of sitting on your lap, and yours of asking me for

what I always refuse?" In this world, she assured him, she would always be a gentle and virtuous woman, and the most that she would promise was to be his wife in Paradise, if he did not ogle the maidens there too much while waiting for her.

When the hardy resolution is once formed of reviewing the correspondence between Franklin and Madame Brillon, the most difficult task is that of compression.

> What! [she wrote to "Monsieur Papa" from Nice, after the capitulation of Cornwallis] You capture entire armies in America, you burgoinise Cornwallis, you take cannon, vessels, munitions of war, men, horses, etc., etc. you capture everything and from everybody, and the gazette alone brings it to the knowledge of your friends, who befuddle themselves with drinking to your health, to that of Washington, of Independence, of the King of France, of the Marquis de la Fayette, of the M^rs^: de Rochambault, Chalelux etc., etc. while you do not exhibit a sign of life to them; yet you should be a bon vivant at this time, although you rarely err in that respect, and you are surely twenty years younger because of this good news, which ought to bring us a lasting peace after a glorious war.

To this letter, Franklin replied on Christmas Day of the year 1781, the birthday of the Dauphin of Heaven, he called it in the letter. He was very sensible, he said, to the greatness of their victory, but war was full of vicissitudes and uncertainty, and he played its game with the same evenness of temper that she had seen him bring to the good and bad turns of a game of chess. That was why he had said so little of the surrender, and had only remarked that nothing could make him perfectly happy under certain circumstances. The point, of course, was that still another capitulation was essential to his happiness. He then proceeds to tell Madame Brillon that, everywhere from Paris to Versailles, everyone spoke of

her with respect, and some with affection and even admiration; which was music to his ears.

I often pass before your house [he adds]. It wears a desolate look to me. Heretofore, I have broken the commandment in coveting it along with my neighbour's wife. Now I do not covet it. Thus I am the less a sinner. But with regard to the wife, I always find these commandments very inconvenient, and I am sorry that we are cautioned to practise them. Should you find yourself in your travels at the home of St. Peter, ask him to recall them, as intended only for the Jews, and as too irksome for good Christians.

These specimens are true to the language of the entire correspondence, but further excerpts from it will not be amiss for the purpose of enabling us to realize how agreeable the flirtation between the two must have been to have produced such a lengthy correspondence despite the fact that Franklin visited Madame Brillon at least every Wednesday and Saturday.

On Nov. 2, 1778, she wrote to Franklin as follows:

The hope that I had of seeing you here, my dear Papa, has kept me from writing to you for Saturday's tea. Hope is the remedy for all our ills. If one suffers, one hopes for the end of the trouble; if one is with friends, one hopes to remain with them always; if one is away from them, one hopes to rejoin them,—and this is the only hope that is left to me. I shall count the days, the hours, the moments; each moment gone brings me nearer to you. We like to grow older when it is the only means of reuniting us to those whom we love. The person, who takes life thus, seeks unceasingly to shorten it; he plans, desires; without the future, it seems to him that he has nothing. When my children are grown up—in ten years—the trees in my garden will shade me. The years slip by, then one regrets them. I might have done such and such a thing, one says then. Had I not been only twenty-five years old, I should not have done the foolish thing of

which I now repent. The wise man alone enjoys the present, does not regret the past, and awaits peacefully the future. The wise man, who, like you, my Papa, has passed his youth in acquiring knowledge and enlightening his fellowmen, and his mature years in obtaining liberty for them, brings a complaisant eye to bear on the past, enjoys the present, and awaits the reward of his labors in the future; but how many are wise? I try to become so, and am so in some respects: I take no account of wealth, vanity has little hold upon my heart; I like to do my duty; I freely forgive society its errors and injustices. But I love my friends with an idolatry that often does me much harm: a prodigious imagination, a soul of fire will always get the better of all my plans and thoughts. I see, Papa, that I must never lay claim to any but the one perfection of loving the most that is possible. May this quality make you love your daughter always! . . . Come, you always know how to combine a great measure of wisdom with a touch of roguishness; you ask Brillon for news of me at the very moment when you are receiving a letter from me; you play the part of the neglected one, just when you are being spoiled, and then you deny it like a madman when the secret is discovered. Oh, I have news of you!

. . . Mama, my children, and Mlle. Jupin present their respects to you. May I venture to beg you to give my kind regards to Mr. Franklinet?

Another letter in the same vein from Madame Brillon to Franklin bears date May 11, 1779:

You are quite right, my good Papa, we should find true happiness only in peace of mind; it is not in our power to change the nature of those with whom we live, nor to check the course of the contradictions that surround us. It is a wise man who speaks, and who tries to comfort his too sensitive daughter by telling her the truth. Oh, my father, I beseech your friendship, your healthy philosophy; my heart hears you and is submissive to you. Give me strength to take the place of an indifference that your child can never feel. But admit, my friend, that for one who knows how to love, in-

gratitude is a frightful misfortune; that it is hard for a woman who would give her life without hesitation to insure her husband's happiness to see the results of her exertions and her longings wiped out by intrigue, and falsity. Time will make everything right; my Papa has said so, and I believe it. But my Papa has also said that time is the stuff that life is made of. *My* life, my friend, is made of a fine and thin stuff, that grief rends cruelly; if I had anything to reproach myself with, I should long have ceased to exist. My soul is pure, simple, frank. I dare to tell my Papa so; I dare to tell him that it is worthy of him; I dare still to assure him that my conduct, which he has deemed wise, will not belie itself, that I shall await justice with patience, that I shall follow the advice of my worthy friend with steadiness and confidence.

Adieu, you whom I love so much—my kind Papa. Never call me anything but "my daughter." Yesterday you called me "Madame," and my heart shrank, I examined myself, to see whether I had done you any wrong, or if I had some failings that you would not tell me of. Pardon, my friend; I am not visiting you with a reproach, I am accusing myself of a weakness. I was born much too sensitive for my happiness and for that of my friends; cure me, or pity me; if you can, do one or the other.

Tomorrow, Wednesday, you will come to tea, will you not? Believe me, my Papa, that the pleasure I feel in receiving you is shared by my husband, my children, and my friends; I cannot doubt it, and I assure you of it.

Franklin's reply to this letter is for a brief moment that of a real father rather than Monsieur Papa. This reminds us that, in one of her letters to him, she states that in her own father she had lost her first and best friend, and recalls the fact that Franklin had told her of the custom of certain savages, who adopt the prisoners, that they capture in war, and make them take the place of the relations whom they have lost. In answer to her statement that ingratitude is a frightful misfortune, he says: "That is true—to ingrates—but not to their benefactors.

You have conferred benefits on those that you have believed worthy of them; you have, therefore, done your duty, as it is a part of our duty to be kindly, and you ought to be satisfied with that and happy in the reflection." This was followed by the advice to his "very dear and always lovable daughter" to continue to fulfill all her duties as a good mother, a good wife, a good friend, a good neighbor, a good Christian, etc. We shall see a little later on what he deemed a part of the duty of a good charitable Christian to be. The letter terminates with an apology for his bad French. "It may," he said, "disgust you, you who write that charming language with so much purity and elegance. But, if you can in the end decipher my awkward and improper expressions, you will, at least, perhaps, experience the kind of pleasure that we find in solving enigmas or discovering secrets."

His letter transmitting his *Dialogue with the Gout* to Madame Brillon was not so decorous. It was in it that he had a word to say about the other kind of Christian conduct that he was in the habit of enjoining upon her. A part of this letter was the following:

One of the characters in your story, namely, the Gout appeared to me to reason well enough, with the exception of his supposition that mistresses have had something to do with producing this painful malady. I myself believe the entire contrary, and this is my method of reasoning. When I was a young man, and enjoyed the favors of the sex more freely than at present, I had no gout. Therefore, if the ladies of Passy had had more of that kind of Christian charity, that I have often recommended to you in vain, I would not have the gout at present. This seems to me to be good logic.

I am much better. I suffer little pain, but I am very feeble. I can, as you see, joke a little, but I cannot be really gay before I hear that your precious health is re-established.

I send you my Dialogue in the hope that it may amuse you at times.

Many thanks for the three last volumes of Montaigne that I return.

The visit of your ever lovable family yesterday evening has done me much good. My God! how I love them all from the Grandmother and the father to the smallest child.

The reply of Madame Brillon was in kindred terms:

Saturday, 18th November, 1780.

There would be many little things indeed to criticise in your logic, which you fortify so well, my dear Papa. "When I was a young man," you say, "and enjoyed the favors of the sex more freely than at present, I had no gout." "Therefore," one might reply to this, "when I threw myself out of the window, I did not break my leg." Therefore, you could have the gout without having deserved it, and you could have well deserved it, as I believe, and not have had it.

If this last argument is not so brilliant as the others, it is clear and sure; what is neither clear nor sure are the arguments of philosophers who insist that everything that happens in the world is necessary to the general movement of the universal machine. I believe that the machine would go neither better nor worse if you did not have the gout, and if I were forever rid of my nervous troubles.

I do not see what help, more or less, these little incidents can give to the wheels that turn this world at random, and I know that my little machine goes very much the worse for them. What I know very well besides, is that pain sometimes becomes mistress of reason, and that patience alone can overcome these two nuisances. I have as much of it as I can, and I advise you, my friend, to have the same amount. When frosts have cast a gloom over the earth, a bright sun makes us forget them. We are in the midst of frosts, and must wait patiently for this bright sun, and, while waiting for it, amuse ourselves in the moments when weakness and pain leave us some rest. *This*, my dear Papa, is *my* logic. . . .

Adieu, my good Papa. My big husband will take my letter to you; he is very happy to be able to go to see you. For me, nothing remains but the faculty of loving my friends. You

surely do not doubt that I shall do my best for you, even to Christian charity, that is to say, with the exception of your Christian charity.

She writes a brief letter to Franklin on New Year's Day of 1781:

If I had a good head and good legs—if, in short, I had everything that I lack,—I should have come, like a good daughter, to wish a happy New Year to the best of papas. But I have only a very tender heart to love him well, and a rather bad pen to scribble him that this year, as well as last year, and all the years of my life, I shall love him, myself alone, as much as all the others that love him, put together.

Brillon and the children present their respects to the kind Papa; and we also send a thousand messages for M. Franklinet.

Some four years later, after Franklin had vainly endeavored to marry Temple Franklin to a daughter of Madame Brillon, we find him writing a letter of congratulation to her upon the happy *accouchement* of her daughter. It elicits a reply in which the cheek of the "beautiful and benignant nature," of which she speaks, undergoes a considerable amount of artificial coloring.

2nd December, 1784.

Your letter, my kind Papa, has given me keen pleasure; but, if you would give me still more, remain in France until you see my sixth generation. I only ask you for fifteen or sixteen years: my granddaughter will be marriageable early; she is fair and strong. I am tasting a new feeling, my good Papa, to which my heart surrenders itself with pleasure, it is so sweet to love. I have never been able to conceive how beings exist who are such enemies to themselves as to reject friendship. They are ingrates, we say; well we are deceived; that is a little hard sometimes, but we are not always so; and to feel oneself incapable of returning the treachery affords a satisfaction of itself that consoles us for it.

My little nurse is charming and fresh as a morning rose. The first days the child had difficulty, . . . but patience and the mother's courage overcame it; all goes well now, and nothing could be more interesting than this picture of a young and pretty person nursing a superb child, the father uninterruptedly occupied with the spectacle, and joining his attentions to those of his wife. My eyes are unceasingly moist, and my heart rejoices, my kind Papa. You realize so well the value of all that belongs to beautiful and benignant nature that I owe you these details. My daughter charges me with her thanks and compliments to you; *ma Cadette* and my men present their regards, and as for me, my friend, I beg you to believe that my friendship and my existence will always be one as respects you.

Once Franklin sought to corner Madame Brillon with a story, which makes us feel for a moment as if the rod of transformation was beginning to work a backward spell, and the Benjamin Franklin of Craven Street and Independence Hall to be released from the spell of the French Circe:

To make you better realize the force of my demonstration that you do not love me, I commence with a little story:

A beggar asked a rich Bishop for a louis by way of alms. You are wild. No one gives a louis to a beggar. An écu then. No. That is too much. A liard then,—or your benediction. My benediction! Yes, I will give it to you. No, I will not accept it. For if it was worth a liard, you would not be willing to give it to me. That was how this Bishop loved his neighbor. That was his charity! And, were I to scrutinize yours, I would not find it much greater. I am incredibly hungry for it and you have given me nothing to eat. I was a stranger, and I was almost as love-sick as Colin when you were singing, and you have neither taken me in, nor cured me, nor eased me.

You who are as rich as an Archbishop in all the Christian and moral virtues, and could sacrifice a small share of some of them without visible loss, you tell me that it is asking too much, and that you are not willing to do it. That is your

charity to a poor wretch, who once enjoyed affluence, and is unfortunately reduced to soliciting alms. Nevertheless, you say you love him. But you would not give him your friendship if it involved the expenditure of the least little morsel, of the value of a liard, of your wisdom.

But see how nimbly the coquette eludes her pursuer:

My dear Papa: Your bishop was a niggard and your beggar a queer enough fellow. You are a logician all the cleverer because you argue in a charming way, and almost awaken an inclination to yield to your unsound arguments founded on a false principle. Is it of Dr. Franklin, the celebrated philosopher, the profound statesman, that a woman speaks with so much irreverence? Yes, this erudite man, this legislator, has his infirmities (it is the weakness, moreover, of great men: he has taken full advantage of it). But let us go into the matter.

To prove that I do not love you, my good Papa, you compare yourself to a beggar who asked alms from a bishop. Now, the rôle of a bishop is not to refuse to give to beggars when they are really in want; he honors himself in doing good. But in truth the kind of charity which you ask of me so amusingly can be found everywhere. You will not grow thin because of my refusals! What would you think of your beggar, if, the bishop having given him the "louis" which he asked, he had grumbled because he did not get two? That, however, is your case, my good friend.

You adopted me as your daughter, I chose you for my father: what do you expect of me? Friendship! Well, I love you as a daughter should love her father. The purest, the most respectful, the tenderest affection for you fills my soul; you asked me for a "louis"; I gave it to you, and yet you murmur at not getting another one, which does not belong to me. It is a treasure which has been entrusted to me, my good Papa; I guard it and will always guard it carefully. Even if you were like "Colin sick," in truth I could not cure you; and nevertheless, whatever you may think or say, no one in this world loves you more than I.

In this letter she puts him off with the teasing assurance of friendship. In another, written from Marseilles, it is with other charming women that she mocks him:

I received on my arrival here, my good Papa, your letter of October 1st. It has given me keen pleasure; I found in it evidences of your friendship and a tinge of that gayety and gallantry which make all women love you, because you love them all. Your proposition to carry me on your wings, if you were the angel Gabriel, made me laugh; but I would not accept it, although I am no longer very young nor a virgin. That angel was a sly fellow and your nature united to his would become too dangerous. I should be afraid of miracles happening, and miracles between women and angels might well not always bring a redeemer. . . .

I have arranged, my good friend, to write alternately to my "great neighbor" and to you; the one to whom I shall not have written will kindly tell the other that I love him with all my heart, and when your turn comes you will add an embrace for the good wife of our neighbor, for her daughter, for little Mother Caillot, for all the gentle and pretty women of my acquaintance whom you may meet. You see that not being able to amuse you, either by my singing or by chess, I seek to procure you other pleasures. If you had been at Avignon with us, it is there you would have wished to embrace people. The women there are charming; I thought of you every time I saw one of them. Adieu, my good Papa; I do not relate to you the details of my journey, as I have written of them tc our neighbor, who will communicate them to you. I limit myself to assuring you of the most constant and the tenderest friendship on my part.

At times the pursuer is too badly afflicted with gout in his legs to maintain the pursuit, and the pursued has to come to his assistance to keep the flirtation going:

How are you, my good Papa? Never has it cost me so much to leave you; every evening it seems to me that you would be very glad to see me, and every evening I think of you. On Monday, the 21st, I shall go to meet you again; I hope that

you will then be very firm on your feet, and that the teas of Wednesday and Saturday, and that of Sunday morning, will regain all their brilliance. I will bring you *la bonne évêque.* My fat husband will make you laugh, our children will laugh together, our great neighbor will quiz, the Abbés La Roche and Morellet will eat all the butter, Mme. Grand, her amiable niece, and M. Grand will help the company out, Père Pagin will play *God of Love* on his violin, I the march on the Piano, and you *Petits Oiseaux* on the armonica.

O! my friend, let us see in the future fine and strong legs for you, and think no more of the bad one that has persecuted you so much. After what is bad, one enjoys what is good more; life is sown with both, which she changes unceasingly. What she cannot keep from being equal and uniform is my tenderness for you, that time, place, and events will never alter.

My mother and all my family wish to be remembered to you.

I have had some news of you through our neighbor, but I must absolutely have some from you.

Amusingly enough, M. Brillon contributes his part to the restoration of the gouty legs to something like normal activity.

The visits of your good husband during my sickness [wrote Franklin to Madame Brillon] have been very agreeable to me. His conversation has eased and enlivened me. I regret that, instead of seeking it when I have been at your home, I have lost so much time in playing chess. He has many stories and always applies them well. If he has despoiled you of some, you can repeat them all the same, for they will always please me, coming from your mouth.

There is another letter from Madame Brillon to Franklin which drew a reply from him, in which he ascended into the Christian heaven with almost as much literary facility as marked his entrance into the Pagan Elysium. Her letter was written during an absence from home:

Here I am reduced to writing to you, my good Papa, and to telling you that I love you. It was sweeter no doubt to let you see it in my eyes. How am I going to spend the Wednesdays and Saturdays? No teas, no chess, no music, no hope of seeing or embracing my good papa! It seems to me that the privation which I experience from your absence would suffice to make me change my views, were I inclined to materialism.

Happiness is so uncertain, so full of crosses, that the deep conviction that we shall be happier in another life can alone tide us over the trials of this one. In Paradise we shall be reunited, never to leave each other again! We shall there live on roasted apples only; the music will be made up of Scotch airs; all parties will be given over to chess, so that no one may be disappointed; every one will speak the same language; the English will be neither unjust nor wicked there; the women will not be coquettes, the men will be neither jealous nor too gallant; "King John" will be left to eat his apples in peace; perhaps he will be decent enough to offer some to his neighbors—who knows? since we shall want for nothing in paradise! We shall never suffer from gout or nervous troubles there. Mr. Mesmer will content himself with playing on the armonica, without wearying us with the electric fluid; ambition, envy, snobbery, jealousy, prejudice, all these will vanish at the sound of the trumpet. A lasting, sweet and peaceful friendship will animate every gathering. Every day we shall love one another, in order that we may love one another still more the day after; in a word, we shall be completely happy. In the meantime, let us get all the good we can out of this poor world of ours. I am far from you, my good Papa; I look forward to the time of our meeting, and I am pleased to think that your regrets and desires equal mine.

My mother and my children send you a thousand tender messages of respect; we should all like to have you here. May I venture to ask you to remember us to your grandson?

And this was the deft reply of Franklin which has come down to us in French corrected by Madame Brillon's hand:

Since you have assured me that we shall meet each other again, and shall recognize each other, in Paradise, I have reflected continually on our arrangements in that country; for I have great confidence in your assurances, and I believe implicitly what you believe.

Probably more than forty years will pass away, after my arrival there, before you will follow me. I fear a little that, in the course of such a long time, you may forget me; that is why I have had thoughts of proposing to you that you give me your word that you will not renew your contract with M. Brillon. I would give you mine at the same time to wait for you, but this monsieur is so good, so generous to us—he loves you—and we him—so well—that I can not think of this proposition without some scruples of conscience—however the idea of an eternity, in which I should not be more favored than to be allowed to kiss your hands, or your cheeks occasionally, and to pass two or three hours in your sweet society at Wednesday and Saturday evening parties, is frightful. In fine, I can not make that proposal, but since, like all who know you, I desire to see you happy in every respect, we may agree to say nothing more about it at this time, and to leave you at liberty to decide, when we are all together again: there to determine the question as you deem best for your happiness and ours; but, determine it as you will, I feel that I shall love you eternally. Should you reject me, perhaps, I shall pay my addresses to Madame D'Hardancourt (the mother of Madame Brillon), who might be glad to keep house for me. In that event I should pass my domestic hours agreeably with her; and I should be better prepared to see you. I should have enough time in those forty years there to practise on the armonica, and, perhaps, I should play well enough to be worthy to accompany your pianoforte. We should have little concerts from time to time, good father Pagin would be of the company, your neighbor and his dear family [M. Jupin], M. de Chaumont, M. B., M. Jourdan, M. Grammont, Madame du Tartre, the little mother, and some other select friends will be our audience, and the dear, good girls, accompanied by some other young angels, whose portraits you have already given me, will sing hallelujahs with us; we

shall eat together apples of Paradise, roasted with butter and nutmeg; and we shall pity them who are not dead.

In another letter, he complains that she shuts him out from everything except a few civil and polite kisses such as she might give to some of her small cousins.

All this, however, was but preliminary to the treaty, which the signer of the Treaty of Alliance between France and the United States formally submitted to her in this letter.

Among the articles of this treaty were to be these:

Article 6. And the said Mr. F. on his part stipulates and covenants that he is to call at the home of M'de B. as often as he pleases.

Article 7. That he is to remain there as long as he pleases.

Article 8. And that when he is with her, he is to do what he pleases.

He did not have much hope, he said, of obtaining her consent to the eighth article.

In another letter, the aged lover tells Madame Brillon that she must not accuse others of being responsible for his having left her half an hour sooner than usual. The truth was that he was very much fatigued for special reasons that he mentions, and thought it more decent to leave her than to fall asleep, which he was beginning to do on a bench in her garden after her descent into it. After all a half-hour with an old man, who could not make the best use of it, was a thing of very little importance. Saturday evening, he would remain with her until she wished him to go, and, in spite of her usual polite phrases, he would know the time by her refusal to give him a little kiss.

With another note, he sent to Madame Brillon his Essay on the Morals of Chess. It was only proper that

it should be dedicated to her, he said, as its good advice was copied from her generous and magnanimous way of playing the game. In the same letter, he stated that his grandson had inspected the house that she had urged him to apply for, but, true still to his adopted character, he said, "He finds it too magnificent for simple Republicans."

In another letter, he told Madame Brillon that he loved to live, because it seemed to him that there was much more pleasure than pain in existence. We should not blame Providence rashly. She should reflect how many even of our duties it had made pleasures, and that it had been good enough, moreover, to call several pleasures sins to enhance our enjoyment of them.

One more letter from Madame Brillon and we shall let her retire from the chess-board with the credit of having proved herself fully a match for Franklin in the longest and most absorbing game of chess that he played in France:

25th of December at Nice.

The atonement is adequate, my dear Papa. I shall no longer call you *Monseigneur* nor even *Monsieur*. My petition succeeded before reaching you; our tears are dried. You love us, you tell us so; you are in good health, and are as roguish as ever, since you are planning to steal me from Brillon, and to take me on a trip to America without letting anyone know it. Everything is as usual. I recognize your fine mask, and I am wholly satisfied. But, my good Papa, why say that you write French badly,—that your pleasantries in that language are only nonsense? To make an academic discourse, one must be a good grammarian; but to write to our friends all we need is a heart, and you combine with the best heart, my lovable Papa, when you wish, the soundest ethics, a lively imagination, and that roguishness, so pleasant, which shows that the wisest man in the world allows his wisdom to be perpetually broken against the rocks of femininity. Write to

me, therefore, write to me often and much, or from spite I shall learn English. I should want to know it quickly, and that would hurt me as I have been forbidden all study, and you would be the cause of my ills, for having refused me a few lines of your bad French, which my family and I—and we are not simpletons—consider very good; ask my neighbors, M. d'Estaing, Mme. Helvétius and her abbés, if it would be right for you to prejudice the improvement which the sun here has caused in my health, for the sake of a little *amour propre* which is beneath My Lord the Ambassador, Benjamin Franklin.

One more letter from Franklin, and we shall cease to walk upon eggs. The French drapery is gone and nothing is left but Saxon nudity:

I am charm'd with the goodness of my spiritual guide, and resign myself implicitly to her Conduct, as she promises to lead me to heaven in so delicious a Road when I could be content to travel thither even in the roughest of all ways with the pleasure of her company.

How kindly partial to her Penitent in finding him, on examining his conscience, guilty of only one capital sin and to call that by the gentle name of Foible!

I lay fast hold of your promise to absolve me of all Sins past, present, & future, on the easy & pleasing Condition of loving God, America and my guide above all things. I am in rapture when I think of being absolv'd of the future.

People commonly speak of Ten Commandments.—I have been taught that there are twelve. The first was increase & multiply & replenish the earth. The twelfth is, A new Commandment I give unto you, *that you love one another.* It seems to me that they are a little misplaced, And that the last should have been the first. However I never made any difficulty about that, but was always willing to obey them both whenever I had an opportunity. Pray tell me dear Casuist, whether my keeping religiously these two commandments tho' not in the Decalogue, may not be accepted in Compensation for my breaking so often one of the ten, I mean that which forbids coveting my neighbour's wife, and which I

confess I break constantly God forgive me, as often as I see or think of my lovely Confessor, and I am afraid I should never be able to repent of the Sin even if I had the full Possession of her.

And now I am Consulting you upon a Case of Conscience I will mention the Opinion of a certain Father of the church which I find myself willing to adopt though I am not sure it is orthodox. It is this, that the most effectual way to get rid of a certain Temptation is, as often as it returns, to comply with and satisfy it.

Pray instruct me how far I may venture to practice upon this Principle?

But why should I be so scrupulous when you have promised to absolve me of the future?

Adieu my charming Conductress and believe me ever with the sincerest Esteem & affection.

Your most obed't hum. Serv.

B F

It would be easy enough to treat this correspondence too seriously. When we recall the social sympathies and diversions which drew the parties to it together, the advanced age of Franklin, the friendly relations sustained by him to all the members of the Brillon household, his attempt to bring about a matrimonial union between Temple Franklin and the daughter of Madame Brillon, the good-humored complaisance of M. Brillon, the usages of Parisian society at that time, the instinctive ease with which Franklin adopted the tone of any land in which he happened to be, and the sportive grace and freedom, brought by his wit and literary dexterity to every situation that invited their exercise, we might well infer that, perhaps, after all, on his part, as well on that of the clever coquette, whose bodkin was quite as keen as his sword, it was understood that the *liaison* was to be only a paper one—an encounter of wit rather than of love. From first to last, the attitude of Madame Brillon towards

Franklin was simply that of a beautiful and brilliant woman, to whom coquetry was an art, and whose intellectual activity had been stimulated, and vanity gratified, by the homage of a brilliant, magnetic and famous man, who possessed to a remarkable degree the faculty of rendering his splendid intellectual powers subservient to purely social uses. It was no slight thing to a woman such as Madame Brillon to be the *Vainqueur du Vainqueur de la Terre*, and little less than this did all France at that time insist that Franklin was. There is nothing in her letters to Franklin to indicate that she ever really had any thought of allowing him any greater degree of intimacy with her than he actually enjoyed. On that point she was apparently as firm as she was in her courteous and kindly but inflexible opposition to a marriage between her daughter and William Temple Franklin.

I despise slanderers [she wrote to Franklin on one occasion], and am at peace with myself, but that is not enough, one must submit to what is called *propriety* (that word varies in each century in each country) to sit less often on your knees. I shall certainly love you none the less, nor will our hearts be more or less pure; but we shall close the mouth of the malicious, and it is no slight thing even for the sage to silence them.

On the other hand there is much to support the idea that the motive at the back of Franklin's letters to Madame Brillon was very much the same as that which inspired the *Journey to the Elysian Fields* and the *Ephemera*. They were to a great extent, at any rate, mere literary bagatelles as those performances were—the offerings of an opulent wit and fancy at the shrine of beauty and fashion, which to be successful in an academic sense had to be informed by the spirit, and attuned to the note, of the time and place. All the same, the letters from Franklin to Madame Brillon are painful reading. Like not a little else in his life, they tend to confirm the impression that

upright, courageous, public-spirited, benevolent, loving and faithful in friendship as he was, on the sensual side of his nature he was lamentably callous to the moral laws and conventions and the personal and social refinements which legitimize and dignify the physical intercourse of the sexes. The pinchbeck glitter, the deceitful vacuity of his moral regimen and *Art of Virtue*, assume an additional meaning, when we see him mumbling the cheek of Madame Brillon, and month after month and year after year writing to her in strains of natural or affected concupiscence. It was things of this sort which have assisted in strengthening the feeling, not uncommon, that Franklin's *Art of Virtue* was a purely counterfeit thing, and the moralist himself an untrustworthy guide to righteous conduct.

In a letter to M. de Veillard, Franklin after his return to America from France referred to the Brillon family as "that beloved family." Restored to his home surroundings, he forgot his French lines, and was again as soberly American as ever in thought and speech. Who would recognize the lover of Madame Brillon in this russet picture that he paints of himself in his eighty-third year in a letter to her?

You have given me Pleasure by informing me of the Welfare and present agreable Circumstances of yourself and Children; and I am persuaded that your Friendship for me will render a similar Account of my Situation pleasing to you. I am in a Country where I have the happiness of being universally respected and beloved, of which three successive annual Elections to the Chief Magistracy, in which Elections the Representatives of the People in Assembly and the Supreme Court join'd and were unanimous, is the strongest Proof; this is a Place of Profit as well as of Honour; and my Friends chearfully assist in making the Business as easy to me as possible.

After a word more with regard to the dwelling and the dutiful family, so often mentioned in his twilight letters, he concludes in this manner:

My Rents and Incomes are amply sufficient for all my present Occasions; and if no unexpected Misfortunes happen during the time I have to live, I shall leave a handsome Estate to be divided among my Relatives. As to my Health, it continues the same, or rather better than when I left Passy; but being now in my 83rd year, I do not expect to continue much longer a Sojourner in this world, and begin to promise myself much Gratification of my Curiosity in soon visiting some other.

In this letter, Franklin was looking forward, we hardly need say, to a very different world from the one where Madame Brillon was to be the second Mrs. Franklin, and they were to eat together apples of Paradise roasted with butter and nutmeg. And it is only just to the memory of Madame Brillon to recall the genuine words, so unlike the tenor of her former letters to Franklin, in which she bade him farewell, when he was leaving the shores of France:

I had so full a heart yesterday in leaving you that I feared for you and myself a grief-stricken moment which could only add to the pain which our separation causes me, without proving to you further the tender and unalterable affection that I have vowed to you for always. Every day of my life I shall recall that a great man, a sage, was willing to be my friend; my wishes will follow him everywhere; my heart will regret him incessantly; incessantly I shall say I passed eight years with Doctor Franklin; they have flown, and I shall see him no more! Nothing in the world could console me for this loss, except the thought of the peace and happiness that you are about to find in the bosom of your family.

It was to the Comtesse d'Houdetot of Rousseau's *Confessions*, however, that Franklin was indebted for

his social apotheosis in France. In a letter to her after his return to America, he calls her "ma chere & toujours—amiable Amie," and declares that the memory of her friendship and of the happy hours that he had passed in her sweet society at Sanois, had often caused him to regret the distance which made it impossible for them ever to meet again. In her letters to him, after his return to America, she seeks in such words as "homage," "veneration" and "religious tenderness" to express the feelings with which he had inspired her. In these letters, there are also references to the *fête champêtre* which she gave in his honor at her country seat at Sanois on the 12th day of April, in the year 1781, and which was one of the celebrated events of the time. When it was announced that Franklin's carriage was approaching the château, the Countess and a distinguished retinue of her relations set out on foot to meet him. At a distance of about half a mile from the château, they came upon him, and gathered around the doors of his carriage, and escorted it to the grounds of the château, where the Countess herself assisted Franklin to alight. "The venerable sage," said a contemporary account, "with his gray hairs flowing down upon his shoulders, his staff in his hand, the spectacles of wisdom on his nose, was the perfect picture of true philosophy and virtue." As soon as Franklin had descended from the carriage, the whole company grouped themselves around him, and the Countess declaimed, with proper emphasis we may be sure, these lines:

> "Soul of heroes and wise men,
> Oh, Liberty! First boon of the Gods!
> Alas! It is too remotely that we pay thee our vows;
> It is only with sighs that we render homage
> To the man who made happy his fellow-citizens."

All then wended their way through the gardens of the Countess to the château, where they were soon seated at a

noble feast. With the first glass of wine, a soft air was played, and the Countess and her relations rose to their feet, and sang in chorus these lines, which they repeated in chorus after every succeeding glass of wine:

"Of Benjamin let us celebrate the renown,
Let us sing the good that he has done to mortals;
In America he will have altars,
And at Sanois we drink to his fame."

When the time for the second glass of wine came, the Countess sang this quatrain:

"He gives back to human nature its rights,
To free it he would first enlighten it,
And virtue to make itself adored,
Assumed the form of Benjamin."

And at the third glass, the Vicomte d'Houdetot sang these words:

"William Tell was brave but savage,
More highly our dear Benjamin I prize,
While shaping the destiny of America,
At meat he laughs just as does your true sage."

And at the fourth glass, the Vicomtesse d'Houdetot sang these words:

"I say, live Philadelphia, too!
Freedom has its allurement for me;
In that country, I would gladly dwell,
Though neither ball nor comedy is there."

And at the fifth glass, Madame de Pernan sang these words:

"All our children shall learn of their mothers,
To love, to trust, and to bless you;
You teach that which may reunite
All the sons of men in the arms of one father."

And at the sixth glass, the aged Comte de Tressan sang these words:

"Live Sanois! 'Tis my Philadelphia.
When I see here its dear law-giver;
I grow young again in the heart of delight,
And I laugh, and I drink and list to Sophie."

And at the seventh glass, the Comte d'Apché sang these lines, in which some violence was done to the facts of English History, and the French Revolution was foreshadowed:

"To uphold that sacred charter
Which Edward accorded to the English,
I feel that there is no French Knight
Who does not desire to use his sword."

And so quatrain preceded glass and chorus followed quatrain until every member of the eulogistic company had sung his or her song. The banqueters then rose from the table, and the Countess, followed by her relations, conducted Franklin to an arbor in her gardens, where he was presented with a Virginia locust by her gardener, which he was asked to honor the family by planting with his own hands. When he had done so, the Countess declaimed some additional lines, which were afterwards inscribed upon a marble pillar, erected near the tree:

"Sacred tree, lasting monument
Of the sojourn deigned to be made here by a sage,
Of these gardens henceforth the pride,
Receive here the just homage
Of our vows and of our incense;
And may you for all the ages,
Forever respected by time,
Live as long as his name, his laws and his deeds."

On their way back to the château, the concourse was met by a band which played an accompaniment, while the Countess and her kinsfolk sang this song:

"May this tree, planted by his benevolent hand,
Lifting up its new-born trunk,
Above the sterile elm,
By its odoriferous flower,
Make fragrant all this happy hamlet.
The lightning will lack power to strike it,
And will respect its summit and its branches,
'Twas Franklin who, by his prosperous labors,
Taught us to direct or to extinguish that,
While he was destroying other evils,
Still more for the earth's sake to be pitied."

This over, all returned to the château where they were engaged for some time in agreeable conversation. In the late afternoon, Franklin was conducted by the Countess and the rest to his carriage, and, when he was seated, they gathered about the open door of the vehicle, and the Countess addressed her departing guest in these words:

"Legislator of one world, and benefactor of two!
For all time mankind will owe thee its tribute,
And it is but my part that I here discharge
Of the debt that is thy due from all the ages."

The door of the carriage was then closed, and Franklin returned to Paris duly deified but as invincibly sensible as ever.

Another French woman with whom Franklin was on terms of familiar affection was the wife of his friend, Jean Baptiste Le Roy. His endearing term for her was *petite femme de poche* (little pocket wife), and, in a letter after his return to Philadelphia, she assured him that, as long as his *petite femme de poche* had the breath of life, she would love him.

On one occasion, when he was in France, she wrote to him, asking him to dine with her on Wednesday, and saying that she would experience great pleasure in seeing and embracing him. Assuredly, he replied, he would not fail her. He found too much pleasure in seeing her, and in hearing her speak, and too much happiness, when he held her in his arms, to forget an invitation so precious.

In another letter to her, after his return to America—the letter which drew forth her declaration that her love for him would last as long as her breath—he told her that she was very courageous to ascend so high in a balloon, and very good, when she was so near heaven, not to think of quitting her friends, and remaining with the angels. Competition might well have shunned an effort to answer such a flourish as that in kind, but a lady, who had been up in a balloon among the angels, was not the person to lack courage for any experiment. She only regretted, she said, that the balloon could not go very far, for, if it had been but able to carry her to him, she *would have been* among the angels, and would have given him proofs of the respect and esteem for him, ineffaceably engraved upon her heart. Sad to relate, in the same letter she tells Franklin that her husband had proved hopelessly recreant to every principle of honor and good feeling. We say, "sad to relate," not for general reasons only, but because Franklin, when he had heard in 1772 that Le Roy was well and happily married, had felicitated him on the event, and repeated his oft-asserted statement that matrimony is the natural condition of man; though he omitted this time his usual comparison of celibacy with the odd half of a pair of scissors. The estrangement between his little pocket wife and her husband, however, did not affect his feeling of devoted friendship for Jean Baptiste Le Roy. Some two years and five months later, when the wild Walpurgis night of the French Revolution was setting in, he wrote to Le Roy to find out why he had been so long silent. "It

is now more than a year," he said, "since I have heard from my dear friend Le Roy. What can be the reason? Are you still living? Or have the mob of Paris mistaken the head of a monopolizer of knowledge, for a monopolizer of corn, and paraded it about the streets upon a pole?" The fact that Le Roy, who was a physicist of great reputation, was a member of both the American Philosophical Society and the Royal Society, led Franklin in one of his letters to address him as his "Dear double *Confrère.*" Le Roy's three brothers, Pierre, Charles and David were also friends of Franklin. Indeed, in a letter to Jean Baptiste, Franklin spoke of David, to whom he addressed his valuable paper entitled *Maritime Observations*, as "our common Brother."

Other friendships formed by Franklin with women in France were those with Madame Lavoisier, Madame de Forbach and Mademoiselle Flainville. Madame Lavoisier was first the wife of the famous chemist of that name, and, after he was guillotined, during the French Revolution, the wife of the equally famous Benjamin Thompson, Count Rumford. She painted a portrait of Franklin, and sent it to him at Philadelphia.

> It is allowed by those, who have seen it [he wrote to her], to have great merit as a picture in every respect; but what particularly endears it to me is the hand that drew it. Our English enemies, when they were in possession of this city (Philadelphia) and my house, made a prisoner of my portrait, and carried it off with them, leaving that of its companion, my wife, by itself, a kind of widow. You have replaced the husband, and the lady seems to smile as well pleased.

So his Eurydice, as soon as the enchantments of the French sorceress lost their power, was re-united to him after all.

Among his French friends, Madame de Forbach, the Dowager Duchess of Deux-Ponts, was conspicuous for the

number of the presents that she made to him. Among others, was the fine crab-tree walking stick, surmounted with a gold head, wrought in the form of a cap of liberty, which he bequeathed to Washington. Other gifts of hers are alluded to in a letter from Franklin to her, acknowledging the receipt of a pair of scissors.

It is true [he said] that I can now neither walk abroad nor write at home without having something that may remind me of your Goodness towards me; you might have added, that I can neither play at Chess nor drink Tea without the same sensation: but these had slipt your Memory. There are People who forget the Benefits they receive, Mad^{e} d^{e} Forbach only those she bestows.

His only letter to Mademoiselle Flainville is addressed to "ma chere enfant," and is signed "Your loving Papa." It helps, along with innumerable other kindred scraps of evidence, to prove how infirm is the train of reasoning which seeks to establish a parental tie between Franklin and anyone simply upon the strength of his epistolary assumption of fatherhood. He might as well be charged with polygamy because he addressed so many persons as "my wife" or "ma femme." This letter also has its interest, as exemplifying the natural manner in which he awaited the sedan chair that was to bear him away from his fleshly tenement. "I have been harassed with Illness this last Summer," he told her, "am grown old, near 83, and find myself very infirm, so that I expect to be soon call'd for."

This is far from being a complete list of the French women with whom Franklin was on terms of affectionate intimacy. To go no further, we know that Madame Brillon, in addition to writing to him on one occasion, "Give this evening to my amiable rival, Madame Helvétius, kiss her for yourself and for me," granted him on another a power of attorney to kiss for her until her

return, whenever he saw them, her two neighbors, Le Veillard, and her pretty neighbor, Caillot.

The truth is that Franklin had a host of friends of both sexes in France.

When Thomas Paine visited that country, after the return of Franklin to America, he wrote to the latter that he found his friends in France "very numerous and very affectionate"; and we can readily believe it. Among them were Buffon, Condorcet, Lafayette, the Duc de la Rochefoucauld, Lavoisier, Chastellux, Grand, Dupont, Dubourg and Le Veillard.

To Buffon, the great naturalist, Franklin was drawn by common scientific sympathies. Like Franklin, he became a sufferer from the stone, and one of the results was a letter in which the former, in reply to an inquiry from him as to how he obtained relief from the malady, stated that his remedy was to take, on going to bed, "the Bigness of a Pigeon's Egg of Jelly of Blackberries"; which, in the eyes of modern medical science was, as a palliative, hardly more effective than a bread pill.

With Condorcet, the philosopher, Franklin was intimate enough to call him, and to be called by him, "My dear and illustrious Confrere"; and it was he, it is worthy of mention, who happily termed Franklin "the modern Prometheus."

For Lafayette, that winning figure, forever fixed in the American memory, despite his visit to America in old age, in immortal youth and freshness, like the young lover and the happy boughs on Keats's Grecian Urn, Franklin had a feeling not unlike that of Washington. In referring to the expedition against England, in which Temple Franklin was to have accompanied Lafayette, Franklin said in a letter to the latter, "I flatter myself, too, that he might possibly catch from you some Tincture of those engaging Manners that make you so much the Delight of all that know you." In another letter, he observed in

reply to the statement by Lafayette that the writer had had enemies in America, "You are luckier, for I think you have none here, nor anywhere." When it became his duty to deliver to Lafayette the figured sword presented to the latter by Congress, he performed the office, though ill-health compelled him to delegate the actual delivery of the gift to his grandson, in the apt and pointed language which never failed him upon such occasions. "By the help," he said, "of the exquisite Artists France affords, I find it easy to express everything but the Sense we have of your Worth and our Obligations to you. For this, Figures and even Words are found insufficient." Through all his letters to Lafayette there is a continuous suggestion of cordial attachment to both him and his wife. When Lafayette wrote to him that Madame de Lafayette had just given birth to a daughter, and that he was thinking of naming her Virginia, he replied, "In naming your Children I think you do well to begin with the most antient State. And as we cannot have too many of so good a Race I hope you & M^me^ de la Fayette will go thro the Thirteen." This letter was written at Passy. In a later letter to Lafayette, written at Philadelphia, he concluded by saying, "You will allow an old friend of four-score to say he *loves* your wife, when he adds, and children, and prays God to bless them all."

For the Duc de la Rochefoucauld he entertained the highest respect as well as a cordial feeling of friendship. "The good Duke," he terms him in a letter to Dr. Price. And it was to the judgment of the Duke and M. le Veillard in France, as it was to that of Vaughan and Dr. Price in England, as we shall see, that he left the important question as to whether any of the *Autobiography* should be published, and, if so, how much. Among the many tributes paid to his memory, was a paper on his life and character read by the Duke before the Society of 1789. One of the Duke's services to America was that of

translating into French, at the request of Franklin, for European circulation all the constitutions of the American States.

Lavoisier was a member with Franklin of the commission which investigated the therapeutic value of mesmerism, and exposed the imposture of Mesmer. There are no social incidents in the intercourse of the two men, friendly as it was, so far as we know, worthy of mention; but, in a passage in one of Franklin's letters to Jan Ingenhousz, we have a glimpse of the master, of whom, when guillotined, after the brutal declaration of Coffinhal, the President of the Revolutionary Tribunal, that the Republic had no need for *savants*, Lagrange remarked, "They needed but a moment to lay that head low, and a hundred years, perhaps, will not be sufficient to reproduce its like." Speaking of an experiment performed by Lavoisier, Franklin wrote to Jan Ingenhousz, "He kindled a hollow Charcoal, and blew into it a Stream of dephlogisticated Air. In this Focus, which is said to be the hottest fire human Art has yet been able to produce, he melted Platina in a few Minutes."

Franklin's friend, the Chevalier (afterwards Marquis) de Chastellux, who served with the Comte de Rochambeau in America, and was the author of the valuable *Travels in North America in the Years 1780, 81 and 82*, succeeded in making himself as agreeable to American women as Franklin succeeded in making himself to French women. There is an echo of this popularity in one of Franklin's letters to him. "Dare I confess to you," he said, when he was still at Passy, and the Chevalier was still in America, "that I am your rival with Madame G—? (Franklin's Katy). I need not tell you, that I am not a dangerous one. I perceive that she loves you very much; and so does, dear Sir, yours, &c."

Through the influence of Leray de Chaumont, Ferdinand Grand, who was a Swiss Protestant, became the

banker of our representatives in France, and, after Franklin's return to America, he remained entrusted with some of Franklin's private funds upon which the latter was in the habit of drawing from time to time. The correspondence between Franklin and himself is almost wholly lacking in social interest, but it indicates a deep feeling of affection upon Franklin's part.

For Dupont de Nemours, the distinguished economist, and the founder of the family, which has been so conspicuous in the industrial, military and naval history of the United States, Franklin cherished a feeling distinctly friendly. His acquaintance with Dupont as well as with Dubourg, who, like Dupont, was a member of the group of French Economists, known as the Physiocrats, was formed, as we have seen, before his mission to France. The correspondence between Franklin and Dupont, however, like that between Franklin and Grand, has but little significance for the purposes of this chapter.[1]

This, however, is not true of the relations between Dr. Barbeu Dubourg, a medical practitioner of high standing, and Franklin. They not only opened their minds freely to each other upon a considerable variety of topics, but their intercourse was colored by cordial association. Of all the men who came under the spell of Franklin's genius, Dubourg, who was, to use Franklin's own words, "a man of extensive learning," was one of the American philosopher's most enthusiastic pupils. "My dear Master," was the term that he habitually used in speaking of him, and his reverence for the object of his admiration led him to translate into French, with some additions, the

[1] No humanitarian levels were too high for the aspirations of Franklin, but he always took care, to use one of the sayings that he conceived or borrowed, not to ride before the horse's head. There is just a suspicion of unconscious sarcasm in a letter from him to Dupont in which he expresses the wish that the Physiocratic philosophy may grow and increase till it becomes the governing philosophy of the human species, "as it must be that of superior beings in better worlds."

edition of Franklin's scientific papers, brought out in London by David Henry in 1769. Nothing that he had ever written, he told his master, had been so well received as the preface to this compilation. "So great," he declared, "is the advantage of soaring in the shadow of Franklin's wings." We pass by the communications from Franklin to Dubourg on purely scientific subjects. One letter from the former to him brings to our knowledge a curious habit into which Franklin was drawn by the uncompromising convictions that he entertained in regard to the origin of bad colds and the virtues of ventilation, of which we shall hereafter speak more particularly.

> You know [he said] the cold bath has long been in vogue here as a tonic; but the shock of the cold water has always appeared to me, generally speaking, as too violent, and I have found it much more agreeable to my constitution to bathe in another element, I mean cold air. With this view I rise almost every morning, and sit in my chamber without any clothes whatever, half an hour or an hour, according to the season, either reading or writing. This practice is not in the least painful, but, on the contrary, agreeable; and, if I return to bed afterwards, before I dress myself, as sometimes happens, I make a supplement to my night's rest of one or two hours of the most pleasing sleep that can be imagined. I find no ill consequences whatever resulting from it, and that at least it does not injure my health, if it does not in fact contribute much to its preservation.

Another letter from Franklin to Dubourg is a dissertation on swimming—the only form of outdoor exercise, to which he was addicted—but in which he was, throughout his life, such an adept that he could even make the following entry in his Journal, when he was at Southampton on his return to America from France: "I went at noon to bathe in Martin's salt-water hot-bath, and, floating on my back, fell asleep, and slept near an

hour by my watch without sinking or turning! a thing I never did before, and should hardly have thought possible. Water is the easiest bed that can be!" In the letter to Dubourg, he recalls the assertion of a M. Robinson that fat persons with small bones float most easily upon the water, makes a passing reference to the diving bell and the swimming waist-coat, now known as the life-preserver, and suggests the comfort of varying the progressive motion of swimming by turning over occasionally upon one's back, and otherwise. He also states that the best method of allaying cramp is to give a sudden vigorous and violent shock to the affected region; which may be done in the air as the swimmer swims along on his back, and recalls an incident illustrative of the danger of throwing one's self, when thoroughly heated, into cold spring water.

> The exercise of swimming [he declared] is one of the most healthy and agreeable in the world. After having swam for an hour or two in the evening, one sleeps coolly the whole night, even during the most ardent heat of summer. Perhaps, the pores being cleansed, the insensible perspiration increases and occasions this coolness. It is certain that much swimming is the means of stopping a diarrhœa, and even of producing a constipation.

In this letter, too, Franklin tells Dubourg how, when he was a boy, he quickened his progress in swimming by aiding the stroke of his hands with oval palettes, and attempted to do so by attaching a kind of sandals to the soles of his feet; and also how in his boyhood, on one occasion, he lay on his back in a pond and let his kite draw him across it without the least fatigue, and with the greatest pleasure imaginable. He thought it not impossible to cross in this manner from Dover to Calais.

Another letter from Franklin to Dubourg on what he calls the doctrines of life and death is a delightful example of both his insatiable inquisitiveness and the readiness

with which he could give a pleasant fillip to any subject however grave. He is speaking of some common flies that had been drowned in Madeira wine, apparently about the time when it was bottled in Virginia to be sent to London, where the writer was:

At the opening of one of the bottles, at the house of a friend where I then was [he said], three drowned flies fell into the first glass that was filled. Having heard it remarked that drowned flies were capable of being revived by the rays of the sun, I proposed making the experiment upon these; they were therefore exposed to the sun upon a sieve, which had been employed to strain them out of the wine. In less than three hours, two of them began by degrees to recover life. They commenced by some convulsive motions of the thighs, and at length they raised themselves upon their legs, wiped their eyes with their fore feet, beat and brushed their wings with their hind feet, and soon after began to fly, finding themselves in Old England, without knowing how they came thither. The third continued lifeless till sunset, when, losing all hopes of him, he was thrown away.

I wish it were possible, from this instance, to invent a method of embalming drowned persons, in such a manner that they may be recalled to life at any period, however distant; for having a very ardent desire to see and observe the state of America a hundred years hence, I should prefer to any ordinary death, the being immersed in a cask of Madeira wine, with a few friends, till that time, to be then recalled to life by the solar warmth of my dear country! But since in all probability we live in an age too early and too near the infancy of science, to hope to see such an art brought in our time to its perfection, I must for the present content myself with the treat, which you are so kind as to promise me, of the resurrection of a fowl or turkey cock.

The friendship of Dubourg for Franklin bore good fruit for America, when the American Revolution came on; for a sanguine letter from him exerted a determining influence in inducing Congress to send Franklin to France.

Le Veillard, who was a neighbor of Franklin at Passy, was one of the friends whom Franklin loved as he loved Hugh Roberts or John Hughes, Strahan or Jan Ingenhousz. And this feeling, as usual, included the members of his friend's family. Public cares, he wrote to Le Veillard, after his return to America, could not make him forget that he and Le Veillard loved one another. In the same letter, he spoke of Madame Le Veillard, as "the best of good women," and of her daughter as the amiable daughter, who, he thought, would tread in her footsteps. In a later letter, he told Le Veillard that he could not give him a better idea of his present happiness in his family than by informing him that his daughter had all the virtues of a certain good lady whom Le Veillard allowed him to love; the same tender affections and intentions, ingenuity, industry, economy, etc. "Embrace that good dame for me warmly, and the amiable daughter," he added. "My best wishes attend the whole family, whom I shall never cease to love while I am B. Franklin." This wealth of affection was richly repaid. The closest relations existed between Franklin and the Le Veillard family, while he was in France, and, when he left that country, Le Veillard was not content to accompany him simply to the seacoast, but was his companion as far as Southampton. To him, Abel James, Benjamin Vaughan and the Shipleys we are beholden for the fact that the *Autobiography* was brought down to the year 1757; there to stop like the unfinished tower which tantalized the world with a haunting sense of its rare worth and incompleteness. Like a faithful, good wife, who avails herself of her intimacy with her husband to bring the continuous pressure of her influence to bear upon him for the purpose of arousing him to a proper sense of his duty, Le Veillard spared neither entreaty nor reproach to secure additions to the precious sibylline leaves of the *Autobiography*. "You blame me for writing three pamphlets and neglecting to

write the little history," Franklin complained. "You should consider they were written at sea, out of my own head; the other could not so well be written there for want of the documents that could only be had here." After this bit of self-defense, Franklin goes on to describe his physical condition. He realized that the stone in his bladder had grown heavier, he said, but on the whole it did not give him more pain than when he was at Passy, and, except in standing, walking or making water, he was very little incommoded by it. Sitting or lying in bed, he was generally quite easy, God be thanked, and, as he lived temperately, drank no wine, and used daily the exercise of the dumb-bell, he flattered himself that the stone was kept from augmenting so much as it might otherwise do, and that he might still continue to find it tolerable. "People who live long," the unconquerable devotee of human existence declared, "who will drink of the cup of life to the very bottom, must expect to meet with some of the usual dregs."

The view taken by Franklin in this letter of his physical condition was entirely too cheerful to work any alteration in the resolution of Le Veillard that the *Autobiography* should be completed, if the unremitting appeal of an old friend could prevail. In a subsequent letter, Franklin tells him that in Philadelphia his time was so cut to pieces by friends and strangers that he had sometimes envied the prisoners in the Bastile. His three years of service as President, however, would expire in the succeeding October, and he had formed the idea of retiring then to Temple's farm at Rancocas, where he would be free from the interruption of visits, and could complete the work for Le Veillard's satisfaction. In the meantime, in view of the little remnant of life left to him, the accidents that might happen before October, and Le Veillard's earnest desire, he had resolved to proceed with the *Autobiography* the very next day, and to go on with it daily until finished.

This, if his health permitted, might be in the course of the ensuing summer.

In a still later letter, Franklin declared that Le Veillard was a hard taskmaster to his friend. "You insist," he said, "on his writing *his life*, already a long work, and at the same time would have him continually employed in augmenting the subject, while the time shortens in which the work is to be executed." Some months later, he is able to send to Le Veillard the joyful intelligence that he had recently made great progress in the work that his friend so urgently demanded, and that he had come as far as his fiftieth year. Indeed, he even stated that he expected to have the work finished in about two months, if illness, or some unforeseen interruption, did not prevent. This expectation was not realized, and the reason for it is stated in painful terms in a subsequent letter from Franklin to Le Veillard.

> I have a long time [he said] been afflicted with almost constant and grevious Pain, to combat which I have been obliged to have recourse to Opium, which indeed has afforded me some Ease from time to time, but then it has taken away my Appetite and so impeded my Digestion that I am become totally emaciated, and little remains of me but a Skeleton covered with a Skin. In this Situation I have not been able to continue my Memoirs, and now I suppose I shall never finish them. Benjamin has made a Copy of what is donc, for you, which shall be sent by the first safe Opportunity.

The copy was subsequently sent to Le Veillard, and, after the death of Franklin, was given by him to William Temple Franklin, to whom Franklin bequeathed most of his papers, in exchange for the original manuscript of the *Autobiography*. The motive for the exchange was doubtless the desire of Temple to secure the most legible "copy" that he could find for the printer of his edition of his grandfather's works. The original manuscript finally be-

came the property by purchase of the late John Bigelow. There is reason to believe that, even after the receipt of the copy of the *Autobiography*, Le Veillard still cherished the hope that the work might be brought down to a later date. Writing to Le Veillard only a few days before Franklin's death, Jefferson said:

I wish I could add to your happiness by giving you a favourable account of the good old Doctor. I found him in bed where he remains almost constantly. He had been clear of pain for some days and was chearful and in good spirits. He listened with a glow of interest to the details of your revolution and of his friends which I gave him. He is much emaciated. I pressed him to continue the narration of his life and perhaps he will.

That Le Veillard had a lively mind we may well infer from an amusing paragraph in one of his letters to Franklin in which he pictures the jealousy with which Madame Helvétius and Madame Brillon regarded each other after the departure of Franklin from France.

You had two good friends here [he said] who might have lived harmoniously enough with each other, because they almost never saw each other, and you assured each of them privately that it was she that you loved the best; but do you venture to write to one and keep silent to the other? The first does not fail to brag and show her letter everywhere; what do you wish to become of the other? Two women draw their knives, their friends take sides, the war becomes general, now see what you have done. You set fire with a bit of paper to one half of the world, you who have so effectively aided in pacifying the other half!

It was a singularly unhappy prophecy that Franklin, after his return to Philadelphia, made to this friend whose lips were so soon to be dyed with the red wine of the guillotine. "When this fermentation is over," he wrote to him with regard to the popular tumults in which France

was then involved, "and the troubling parts subsided, the wine will be fine and good, and cheer the hearts of those who drink it."

A bright letter from the daughter of Le Veillard merits a passing word. In reply to the statement of Franklin that she did not embrace him with a good grace, she says:

> You know doubtless a great number of things; you have travelled much; you know men, but you have never penetrated the head of a French girl. Well! I will tell you their secret: When you wish to embrace one and she says that it does not pain her, that means that it gives her pleasure.

Very dear, too, to Franklin, was Dr. Jan Ingenhousz, the eminent scientist and physician to Maria Theresa. Many years after Franklin made his acquaintance, he received from Franklin the assurance that he had always loved him ever since he knew him, with uninterrupted affection, and he himself in a previous letter to Franklin styled him in his imperfect English "the most respectful" of all his friends. Only a few of the numerous letters that Franklin must have written to this friend are known to be in existence, and these are not particularly interesting from a social point of view. In one respect, however, they strikingly evince the kindness of heart which made Franklin so lovable. As was true of many other Europeans of his time, Ingenhousz incurred considerable pecuniary loss in American business ventures, and, like King David, who in his haste called all men liars, he was disposed at one time to call all Americans knaves. One of his American debtors, as we have already stated, was Samuel Wharton, of Philadelphia.

> I know we should be happy together [wrote Franklin to Ingenhousz when the writer was about to return to America], and therefore repeat my Proposition that you should ask Leave of the Emperor to let you come and live with me during the little Remainder of Life that is left me. I am confident

his Goodness would grant your Request. You will be at no expence while with me in America; you will recover your Debt from Wharton, and you will make me happy.

And the letter concludes with the request that Ingenhousz, who shared his enthusiasm for electrical experiments, would let him know soon whether he would make him happy by accepting his invitation. "I have Instruments," he declared, in terms that remind us of Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim, when they were planning their future military diversions together, "if the Enemy did not destroy them all, and we will make Plenty of Experiments together."

Such were the more conspicuous of the friendships which clustered so thickly about the life of Franklin.[1]

[1] Franklin had many intimate friends besides those mentioned in our text. In two letters to Samuel Rhoads he refers to his "dear old Friend Mrs. Paschal." In a letter to Thomas Mifflin, congratulating him upon his election as President of Congress, he speaks of their "ancient friendship." William Hunter he addresses in 1786 as "my dear old friend." In a letter to him in 1782, Thomas Pownall, the former Colonial Governor, says: "Permett me to say how much I have been your old invariable friend of four or five and twenty years standing." Jean Holker and his wife, of Rouen, were "dear friends" of his, and he was on terms of intimacy with John Joseph Monthieu, a Paris merchant, and Turgot, the French statesman. He writes to Miss Alexander from Passy that he has been to pay his respects to Madame La Marck, "not merely," he says, "because it was a Compliment due to her, but because I love her; which induces me to excuse her not letting me in." One of Franklin's friends, Dr. Edward Bancroft, a native of Massachusetts, who kept one foot in London and one foot in Paris during the Revolution, for the purpose, as was supposed by those of our envoys who were on good terms with him, of collecting, and imparting to our mission, information about the plans of the British Ministry, has come to occupy an equivocal position in the judgment of history. George Bancroft, the American historian, has set him down as "a double spy," and the view of Bancroft has been followed by others, including Henri Doniol, in his work on the participation of France in the establishment of the United States. But it would seem difficult for anyone to take this view after reading the acute and vigorous discussion of the subject by Dr. Francis Wharton in the *Diplomatic Correspondence of the Revolution*. In a letter to David Hartley of Feb. 22, 1779, Franklin pronounced Bancroft a "Gentleman of Character and Honour."

When we remember that all these men and women have with him said "good-night" to his Landlord of Life and Time, and gone off to their still chambers, we experience a feeling something like that of Xerxes when he gazed upon his vast army and reflected that not a man in it might return from Greece. The thought that there might never again be any movement in those cheerless rooms, nor any glimmer of recurring day was well calculated to make one, who loved his friends as Franklin did, exclaim, "I too with your Poet trust in God." The wide sweep of his sympathies and charities, the open prospect ever maintained by his mind, are in nothing made clearer to us than in the extent and variety of his friendships. They were sufficiently elastic, as we have seen, to include many diverse communities, and such extremes as Joseph Watson and James Ralph, George Whitefield and Lord le Despencer, John Jay and General Charles Lee, Polly and Madame Brillon. The natural, instinctive side of his character is brought to our attention very plainly in a letter from him to David Hartley, which reveals in an engaging manner the profound effect worked upon his imagination by a poor peasant, but *véritable philosophe*, who had walked all the way to Paris from one of the French provinces for the purpose of communicating a purely benevolent project to the world. But, at the same time, he never found any difficulty in accommodating himself to aberrant or artificial types of character, or to alien usages, customs and modes of thought. He belonged to the *genus homo* not to the species *homo Americanus* or *Britannicus*. Like the politic and much-experienced Ulysses of Tennyson, familiar with

> "Cities of men
> And manners, climates, councils, governments,"

he could say,

> "I am a part of all that I have met."

Wherever he went into the world, he realized his own aspiration that the time might come when a philosopher could set his foot on any part of the earth, and say, "This is my Country." Wherever he happened to be, he was too exempt from local bias, thought thoughts, cherished feelings, and spoke a language too universal not to make a strong appeal to good will and friendship.

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